

# Kingdom Worker Connection —

CHRIST IN YOUTH

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CHANGING THE  
CONVERSATION  
OF MISSIONS

# CHRIST IN YOUTH

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# PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Andy Hansen

PRESIDENT · CHRIST IN YOUTH

If you had the opportunity to speak to 48,000 teenagers, what would you say to them?

This summer, Christ in Youth is hosting 22 MIX events for middle school students and 36 MOVE events for high school students across the U.S., Canada, and Ireland.

That's 58 events in just eight weeks, reaching more than 48,000 young people and youth workers.

**FORTY-EIGHT THOUSAND!**

Eternity hangs in the balance. Generation Z is poised for a movement of Kingdom work.

Will you pray for the 48,000? And will you join us in expanding CIY's summer tour?

After years of collaborating and praying with youth leaders in New England, CIY is launching a MOVE event on the campus of Gordon College near Boston.

And we're also expanding in the Western U.S.

MIX is also growing on the campus of Central Washington University. Hundreds of middle school students will hear the call to Kingdom work because of this event – CIY's only in the state of Washington.

While these events are growing, they are not yet sustainable. Group registration fees won't cover the costs of putting on the event. We're expecting an \$18,000 loss. Our projections indicate

that we're a couple of years away from these events covering the cost. In the meantime, we need help underwriting the expansion efforts.

Would you be willing to help CIY launch the MOVE high school week in Massachusetts and the MIX middle school week in Washington?

In honor of the 48,000 people going to MOVE and MIX around the world this summer, **we're asking you for a gift of \$48**. This contribution will provide countless life-changing moments for teens on the East and West coasts of the U.S.

Feel free to contribute through the mail or online at [ciy.com/summerof48](http://ciy.com/summerof48).

Thank you for considering this opportunity. We are grateful for your partnership.

Young people need to hear the call to Kingdom work. You have a chance to help them.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Hansen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

# KINGDOM WORKER CRASH

Teenagers from all over the U.S. and Northern Ireland come together to share stories of how they responded to Christ's call on their lives to be Kingdom workers

STORY BY BECCA HAINES  
PHOTOS BY TATYM BROWN

Every year for the past five years CIY's MOVE team has invited a handful of high school students to share their stories on film to help inspire peers their age who will attend MOVE events later in the summer. This weekend film-project is called the "Kingdom Worker Crash." MOVE Program Coordinator Kat Hope said she and others from her team were brought to tears this year with the students' honest words and stories.

"It was a very powerful weekend," Hope said. "Traditionally, the Crash has been a scheduled film shoot in a studio, but we saw a chance for us to thank and serve the students who have inspired their communities and let them recharge. We didn't expect to be so recharged listening to their stories in an environment that felt more relational. The Crash had a whole different vibe, and we watched nine students comfortably gather in excitement to tell their stories because they knew they were with family."

The nine students who will share their stories this summer will be Samuel Kiefer, California; Chris Teeter and Alex Fincher, Missouri; Emily Bracey, Indiana; Abigail Fitzgibbon and Zea Maroon, Illinois; Samuel Onyett, Ohio; Cade Lopez, Kansas; and Jamie McKee, of Northern Ireland.

For the first time, this year's lineup of students got to know each other in the months leading up to the Crash through online communication. Hope said they were thrilled to finally meet face-to-face – especially McKee, the Crash's first international student. This Irish student's impactful testimony will be essential at MOVE's first event in Northern Ireland this August.

"Jamie's interview was incredibly emotional," Hope said. "He was in a horrible accident as a child and doctors told his family

he wouldn't live. Then they said he wouldn't walk or talk. Today he walks and talks, and he made it all the way to Dallas to tell his story. On top of that, he talks honestly about depression. He told us about how our weakness is essential so that God can work through us."

Hope noted it was nothing less than evidence of God's hand over the event when many of the group's individual stories revealed experiences with foster care – a topic that will be explored by MOVE this summer. CIY has produced a short film called "Hard to Place" that MOVE will use this year to bring awareness to the more than 400,000 kids in the U.S. foster care system.

“  
*Our mission is for students to see these different forms of Kingdom work and recognize that they can do that, but in their own way.*  
”

“At the beginning of the whole process, it was as if God had highlighted the nine names that we ended up with,” Hope said. “It was so evident, peaceful and clear that those were the students who needed to be there this year. Then in the storytelling process we discovered multiple students – who we didn't know – had a history with foster care. There

were multiple moments when we saw God's hand move for foster kids in unexpected ways. He brought those stories to us and it was very powerful.”

There is no doubt God will continue to use this year's collection of Crash stories to speak to high schoolers at MOVE this summer, and Hope said the annual event serves as an impactful tool to reach individuals on a personal level.

“Our mission is for students to see these different forms of Kingdom work and recognize that they can do that, but in their own way,” she said. “Every student has something God has given them that makes them unique and skilled – even if they don't see it yet. I hope each story inspires high schoolers to find their Kingdom work and know that it looks different for everyone.”



**ABOVE:** Eight students from across the U.S., and one from Northern Ireland, joined the CIY MOVE team earlier this year for the Kingdom Worker Crash – a weekend event during which each of their stories was captured on film to be shared with thousands of their peers this summer at MOVE events. Pictured from left are: Zea Maroon, Cade Lopez, Jamie McKee, Alex Fincher, Kat Hope (CIY MOVE program assistant), Chris Teeter, Abby Fitz, Emily Bracy, Sam Kiefer and Sam Onyett. **RIGHT:** Over the course of the Kingdom Worker Crash weekend, all of the students participated in devotions, times of prayer, and group discussion about how their stories can inspire others to embrace Kingdom work.



# THE ART OF THEME DEVELOPMENT

SuperStart and Believe programs get an 18-month head start on planning for each year's tour

STORY BY BECCA HAINES · GRAPHIC DESIGN BY BY MARK RANKIN

The process of developing a theme for a CIY program starts a lot further back than most people might think. Both the Believe and SuperStart weekend events are already ramping up for their fall tours, but planning for those events have been ongoing for the better part of a year already.

Believe – CIY's weekend program for junior high students – and SuperStart – CIY's weekend program for preteens – have tours that start in October and run through April of the next year, but the initial planning stages for those tours start as many as 18 months prior to that first event. In fact, by the time the lights first hit the Believe or SuperStart stages in October, the programming teams at CIY are already dreaming and planning the theme for the next tour, which won't come for another year.

The process starts with some pointed questions and conversations with ministers from all over the U.S. Junior high ministers and preteen ministers lend their expertise to the development process and inform CIY's programmers of the various topics and conversations their students are having throughout the year. Out of those conversations come the first glimmers of topics that God is leading CIY toward.

"We lean into the Holy Spirit and listen to the pulse of youth ministry by talking to pastors and leaders to understand what the needs of the students are," said Mike Branton, Believe's program director. "We don't make the decision for the theme in isolation. We want to hear the voices of people who are in the trenches of youth ministry, listening to students to understand what they're facing."

Gathering information and listening is the first stage of theme development. All CIY programming teams always keep in the forefront of their minds how the ministry can come alongside the local church to bolster or continue conversations that are relevant to young people.

Take SuperStart's upcoming tour, for instance. The theme for the 2019/2020 tour will be called "Game Changer," and is born from the idea that many preteens today are starting to feel like the odds are stacked against them.

"What do they do when they're not sure how to get through what life throws at them?" asked Rob Watson, SuperStart's program director. "This year's SuperStart tour is about finding hope in those moments through God's promises. Preteens will learn that when they trust God and hold tightly to His promises, they'll discover the hope that can carry them through any circumstance and into the abundant life of a Kingdom worker. Knowing that changes everything – it's a 'Game Changer.'"

Watson said the idea behind the theme has been in discussion for many months, and by the end of last year that discussion started to turn toward how to bring to life those ideas through interactive experiences.

By December – midway through the tour schedule – both Believe and SuperStart programming teams had narrowed down the big ideas into three or four specific topics that they could dissect over the course of a weekend event. From there each member of the team started to extensively pray over each idea.

In the case of SuperStart, the imagery that it seemed like the Holy Spirit was leading the team toward was one that circled around card and board games.

"Have you ever played a card game or board game and things just looked bleak?" Watson said.

"Sometimes when we get to the end of a game it seems impossible to win, but then we draw the 'wild' card and suddenly it doesn't matter what happens next. You know that because of that 'wild' card you can get



through anything the game may throw at you. It completely changes the way you play. It gives you hope that you can win. It's a 'Game Changer,' and that's a perfect metaphor to describe the way that Jesus is a game changer for all of us. That's an incredible truth to share with preteens."

In January a summit was held during the two weeks prior to the start of the spring leg of the tours. The main goal of the summit is to land on a theme and specific scriptures for the program. In the room are programmers, speakers, artists and sometimes band members. Branton said this approach of inclusion sets a tone of consistency for the tour and allows performers and speakers to know the trajectory of the theme because they help build it. Jeff Walling – a nationally renowned speaker and CIY board of trustees member who has been a speaker on Believe stages from the time it started in 1997 – has joined this annual summit on numerous occasions.

"We begin with the Spirit's leading and the humility of knowing God might take us a new direction from what we planned," Walling said. "It's all God's

Word, and it's all good. So when we select a specific scripture for a specific moment, we trust God's hand in that. It's so great to know the backstory of where God will be meeting students. It's incredibly helpful to me as a speaker to understand the students' needs and be the straw from which God's goodness channels through to the students."

Once the theme is decided, Branton said the next stage of development moves fast in solidifying the details. Writers and filmmakers collaborate on scripts, musicians select songs and artistic graphic design teams all put their talents to work.

"It is a huge, year-round team effort," Branton said. "We have experts in their passions who do amazing things with the theme each year. It's evident in every area of the production – from the staging, lighting cues, songs, small group materials and films we use in the event. It's fun to collaborate and produce the tactile elements that students will take home with them – like last year's dog tags – all to tell a clear message of what God wants them to hear and have our speakers and artists pull the thread through to the story of the Gospel."

The "last stage" of development for SuperStart and Believe happens during the last months of spring and early months of summer – even though both programs are in continuous motion throughout the year. Plans are executed, travel is booked and the entire CIY team lifts up prayers for the tour, youth leaders and students.

That means that as you read this, both the SuperStart and Believe teams are not only putting the final touches on the theme development for the upcoming 2019/2020 tour, but are also taking the first steps of planning for the tour that will begin 18 months from now.

It's an exciting time for the Believe and SuperStart teams, and your prayers on their behalf – and on behalf of the tens of thousands of junior highers who will hear those messages in the coming years – would be much appreciated. To see a lineup of dates and locations for these programs, please visit [ciy.com/superstart](http://ciy.com/superstart) and [ciy.com/believe](http://ciy.com/believe).



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# CHANGING THE CONVERSATION

Engage program trains young people for a lifetime of Kingdom work through mission experiences

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STORY & PHOTO BY CHRIS ROBERTS

**M**ost Christians know that the call to missions is a command from Christ. Before He ascended into Heaven He commanded His disciples – and by extension all of His followers – to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). For some this means a full-time career in another country ministering in ways that brings the Gospel of Christ to new people groups all over the world. Christ In Youth partners with many of those cross-cultural Kingdom workers every year. But for an even larger group of Christians that mission is answered by participating in short-term trips – which for the past 50 years have traditionally been thought of as 10-to-20-day excursions to “Third World” countries to care for widows or build houses for the poor or conduct Vacation Bible School lessons for children.

That traditional view of short-term missions – the idea that a mission trip consists of going and doing something – has slowly been changing in recent years. Put simply, the idea of a mission trip is shifting away from the intention of “doing” and more toward the attitude of “being.”

“Short-term mission trips give people an opportunity to go and be a part of the Church – the Kingdom – in an entirely new way,” said Brittany Shoemake, director of CIY’s Engage international trips. “They get to see how God is working all over the world. The ‘doing’ – how we participate in Kingdom work – should flow out of our ‘being’ – being the Church, being with people, being connected to the heart of Jesus. What we do on a mission trip pales in comparison to who we get to be. There’s a work that God does in the lives of those participating in a missions experience that happens naturally as they’re joining in the work that God is already doing in that place. When you join with ministry that’s already happening, there’s a mutually beneficial thing that happens between those who live in that culture and those from the U.S. who are visiting.”

In essence, the missions experience becomes a training ground for Kingdom work. Young people who join Engage on international trips learn how to develop relationships in a cross-cultural experience. They learn how to develop soft skills – such as boldness in sharing their testimony or hospitality

to strangers – while also appreciating that there are gifts and talents that those already living in that place have that far exceed their own. It’s from this idea that CIY’s Engage program – which offers nearly 20 international short-term mission trips every year – has developed its mission statement, “Training for a life of Kingdom work.”

“Without the key element of training, we believe short-term mission trips aren’t as beneficial as they could be – on both sides,” Shoemake said. “We do things with people – we join in the work that God is already doing. We get to be a part of that during the trip, but also realize it should go way beyond the trip. We’re trained to join in on what God is doing in our hometowns, or wherever He calls us next. That’s part of the reason we’ve found ourselves using the word ‘experience’ a lot more, because it encompasses more of Engage’s purpose. It gives you a different perspective when you talk about an ‘experience’ versus a ‘trip.’ A trip has a beginning and an end. An experience is much more than that. An experience speaks to immersing yourself into something bigger and engaging it with your mind, heart and hands. It’s way more of a grand picture of God’s Kingdom, and that’s what we’ve wanted to create.”

Shoemake went on to say that the key in any type of cross-cultural experience is relationships. If investing in relationships isn’t at the top of the list when it comes to the purpose of a short-term trip, Shoemake suggests that a huge value of the experience is lost ... for everyone.

“We have to get rid of this idea that a short-term mission trip means you’re going to another country as the ‘Great American Savior,’” she said. “When there’s a relationship it means there’s a partnership and a benefit on both sides. That’s why I think short-term mission experiences are beneficial. There can be mutual encouragement that’s edifying to the Church. When you’re encouraged by someone who isn’t in your regular circle, there’s a weight that comes with that. If your only goal or purpose is to go and encourage other believers in the work they’re doing, that’s fantastic! That’s what we’re called to do as part of the Church. It’s beautiful when we serve alongside one another and learn from each other. I think ‘relationship’ is the biggest word you have to talk about in regard to mission trips.



**Students from Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian Church** in Tulsa, OK, pray for Pastor Henry while visiting Honduras with Engage in mid-March. Pastor Henry shepherds a congregation in Sampedrana, a mountain village about two hours from Tegucigalpa.

Yes, you may do work projects, and as long as they're coming from a need brought up within the local community that's beneficial - it is Kingdom work. But ultimately the relationship is the most important part of a mission experience - and that comes through doing things with people, not for them."

Students who join Engage get to experience that side-by-side learning first-hand. And through that process they discover so much about other cultures and how other people experience God. They get to serve alongside people doing Kingdom work in their own context, which often serves as inspiration for them to do Kingdom work in their own contexts back home.

"I think God blew open some big ideas I have about Church," said Katelyn Adams, who brought her youth group from Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian Church on an Engage International trip to Honduras in March. "As I've reflected back over (our experience), I can't help but think of Matthew 11:28-30 in the Message. 'Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to

take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me - watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.' That's what this trip was to me - watching how they do it. Church. Evangelism. Loving one another. Serving. Watch how they do it."

That kind of eye-opening discovery into new depths of God's Kingdom is why CIY is intent on changing the narrative around short-term missions. Trips to other countries can be beneficial - lives are often changed, in fact. But if trips are solely based on just going and doing, a huge opportunity is missed.

"Learning more about the Church is something that no amount of money can buy," Shoemake said. "Just writing a check or swinging a hammer doesn't build a relationship. That's only done when you spend time with people and get to know them and learn from them. It's a little taste of Heaven when you get to join up with the work God is already doing and serve alongside people who you're going to be spending eternity with."

# CHURCH MATTERS

Mission experience in Honduras leads youth minister to discover new truths about Christ's Church

STORY BY KATELYN ADAMS

*This is the third in a seven-part series that examines CIY Engage's Seven Mission Principles, which are taught to every student who joins Engage for an international mission trip. The principles are: Missions is a Lifestyle, Cultures are Beautiful and Broken, Church Matters, Observation Before Interpretation, Do Things With not For People, God is Already Working, and Poverty is Everywhere.*

**I**n March, a group of students and adult leaders from Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma went on an Engage trip to Honduras. Katelyn Adams, youth minister at "The Kirk" had a profound experience that redefined what Church means to her. Her thoughts perfectly capture the heart of Engage's mission principle Church Matters.

On our trip to Honduras we visited an area called Las Bojitas in the mountains about 30 miles outside of Tegucigalpa. We went up to do some projects for a Hill Climber Coffee farm. When we got there, we split up into a few teams and started on some projects – building a bathroom for the church building, mixing concrete, and moving dirt from one side of the road to the other to level out the ground under the drying racks for the coffee beans.

We started on the projects with the help of a local guy who was breaking up all the dirt. His name was Rony. After a bit I learned that he was the farm manager, and we chatted some in between working and a language barrier.

When we broke for lunch, we got to hear Rony's story. Turns out, he's also the pastor of the church. He started it so he could minister to the workers on the farm. They hire a lot of day workers throughout harvest season to dig holes, plant the coffee, harvest the beans, de-shell them, dry them and roast them. It's a really big process. After Rony shared, I asked him how he gets the workers connected with the church, because I was thinking through what a cool evangelism tool this is. I didn't understand how he moved it from the field into the building.

Felipe (our mission partner and translator) laughed as he conveyed the question, and Rony got a funny look on his face and basically said "We work side-by-side, all day. That's how."

We have complicated Church. That's the biggest thing I learned on this trip. It's not about programs and events, it's the long obedience in the same direction. It's the person right next to you, wherever you are.

This church in the mountains of Honduras is not desperately trying to get more people in its doors, it's quite literally about harvesting out in the field. The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. I've been thinking about this a lot – the workers are few who will go out into the field. For Pastor Rony's church, it's not about getting a congregation, it's about giving the Gospel. It's about giving a worker a fair wage and the kind of water that will make him never go thirsty again. In more ways than one I was reminded that it's God who does the growing, not us. God is faithful to His Church; are we faithful to His call of the harvest?

After lunch, Felipe asked a few of us to go dig some holes so that they would be ready to plant more coffee. So we hiked up the mountain with post hole diggers. When we finished our hole, we sat down around it, exhausted. I asked the girls with me about what Pastor Rony said. We talked about how ministry happens literally right here, around holes in a field – but we make it so much more complicated back home. They decided to pray over that hole, and the worker who would plant there, and the worker who would eventually harvest the coffee from it. And so we prayed ... that they would have a conversation in this field about Jesus and come to know him for the first time.

That afternoon was my favorite of the trip. I think God blew open some big ideas I have about Church. I was able to watch how they live out church every day – evangelism, loving one another, serving ... That's what this trip was to me: a new view of Church.



# CHRIST IN YOUTH

CIY coordinates and produces programs, events and trips for students in grades four through college throughout the U.S. and the world, and develops resources that benefit the local church. CIY amplifies Christ's call on students' lives to be Kingdom workers. **For more information, visit [ciy.com](http://ciy.com).**



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