

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2018

Dear Members, Associate Members and Supporters,

I am delighted to be able to share with you this report as National President of YWCA Ireland.

YWCA Ireland emerged from the very origins of the YWCA movement and has served and supported the women of Ireland for over 150 years. I have been involved with YWCA Ireland since 2009 - and I feel deeply privileged to be a part of the story. You will each have your own stories and experiences, and I would invite you to discuss and share these during our lunch together later.

During this period, I have witnessed and experienced the Association change, grow and flourish - in almost every area. This has not come without its challenges and difficulties, which in turn has the silver lining of further opportunities for refining and developing us even further. However, it may require some reflection and perspective to see and understand what those are.

The months since our AGM in October 2017 have been no different and the Association continues to go from strength to strength in pursuing YWCA Ireland's vision is to see women in Ireland engaged, connected and transformed to lead and affect change through Christ.

We have continued to refine and develop our governance structures and procedures to ensure that we are operating to the highest standards and to ensure that we are accountable, transparent and demonstrate good stewardship of the resources that we have been blessed with.

Sustainability of the Association has been an important focus. How do we ensure that the Association is equipped to fulfil our vision mission and values in the years to come? This has required wisdom in the oversight of our finances and resources. It also has also required investment in the resources of the Association, for example in expanding the National Office staff team.

Discernment has also been a key word for the National Board as we have addressed issues encountered by the Association. Also, as our General Secretary will share, the strategic review process is ongoing and I feel that it will be a real landmark for the Association as we look to this next phase in our history and seek to discover how God wants to use YWCA Ireland - we want to catch His vision and passion.

We have clarified, renewed and deepened partnerships and relationships throughout the organisation. We continue to engage with the wider YWCA movement and to develop our links with sister organisations.

I would like to note my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the members of National Board, members of the Trust Corporation, the local committees, staff teams and volunteers for all that they have brought and continue to bring to the life and work of YWCA Ireland. Each of you are truly valued and are an answer to prayer.

Reflecting on the months (and years) past, there is a real sense of the Association being refined, of being honed, of being made ready for what is on the horizon for YWCA Ireland. Whatever the opportunities or challenges that lay ahead, I am reminded of the image in Exodus (13v21-22) of God leading his people as pillars of cloud and fire so that they could travel by day and by night, the pillars never leaving their place in front of the people. Our faith is foundational and is at the heart of all we seek to do and how we operate. We will continue to seek God's will in and through all situations and in the words of Ephesian 6v18: ...pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests...".

God Bless,

Sarah Caughey
YWCA Ireland National President