

THE LANGFORDS

GLOBAL STRATEGY MISSIONARIES SERVING ALONGSIDE
THE THREE WORLDS TEAM AND THE CHURCH OF GOD IN
ENGLAND.



IYC: There and Back

In 2018, Egan Road Church, Birkenhead had the honor of sending a group to the International Youth Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana. The students attending created fundraising events, sold baked goods, and raffled off prizes to raise as much money as they could. Through the faithfulness of several donors and Egan Road Church we were able to cover the rest. It was a trip that was initially wrought with anxiety, fear, and worry because several in the group had never left England. The trip started with one of our students being searched, in the Manchester, UK airport, causing a panic attack. We knew the trip was going to have its bumps and we prepared accordingly. Many of the students became overwhelmed by the sheer size of, well, everything, especially the size of the church that was hosting our group. The large congregation, loud music, and the grand production was something we talked about with them but in the moment, it was too much for some, they needed to stand outside. Although we were prepared for much of what the group would encounter, I (Zach) wasn't fully prepared for what God had in store for them. Through the loud music, lights, and crowds of people, God began to speak to them in his still quiet voice. Their lives began to change. Their hearts began to change. Upon returning from IYC 2018, three were baptized, and one of them wanted to pursue ministry opportunities. We were already planning and fundraising for IYC 2020 when the world changed as Covid began to spread and caused the UK to go into full lockdown. During this time plans changed, and opportunities were missed. God was still moving and working.

Fast forward, through COVID lock-downs, and canceled IYC trips, we were presented with the opportunity to take a couple more students to this life-changing event. Our youth group looks vastly different than in 2018, Most of our former youth are now adults so we went through a time of rebuilding. We are blessed to have an amazing group of young people now and we are thankful for two specific students that came back after the group was closed during those lock-down years. When the chance to attend IYC Orlando came we knew it had to happen for them. Through several fundraising events, bake sales, raffles, and faithful partners around the world, we were able to take these two students as well as Josh S., who was a student in 2018 and is now an active youth group leader at Egan Road Church. IYC 2024 took place in Orlando, Florida at the World Marriott Hotel, where nearly 3000 students converged. Like our previous group, this was a trip of firsts; the first time on an airplane, the first time outside of England, the first time at a youth conference, and the first time having Chick-fil-A. Before the conference began, we were able to visit a supporting church in Tampa, spend time at a beach, visit alligators and crocodiles at Gator Land, and walk 12 miles through an amusement park.

The theme for this year's IYC - Origins - utilized Psalm 145:4-7 as the catalyst verse. This was especially poignant as it was also the 100-year celebration of IYC events. Although there were some nervous feelings from one of our students, they both jumped in and experienced as much as they could, including a neon light party after the first session, a 5K to raise funds for a ministry in Zimbabwe, and meeting new people. The beginning of the conference was a wonderful display of what we could expect. The speaker, Jeff Mugford, brought a profound message on commitment and choices we have to make as Christians. Josh S. said this about the first session: "The speaker was great. He was more powerful than people could imagine". The remainder of the conference was filled with powerful leaders bringing messages of redemption, renewal, and the power of the Holy Spirit interrupting darkness in our lives. Lori Maldonado shared a powerful story of redemption and the generational impact of sharing the gospel message to our loved ones.



One student commented, “Lori’s story was very inspirational.” Near the end of the conference our students attended a session led by longtime Egan Road Church friend, Rondale Broom, who spoke on past experiences in school and how excepting Jesus changed his life in powerful ways. My prayer for these students is that God would intercede in their lives in powerful ways and that they can share the love and hope they experienced with their families and friends.

We could not have been able to do this without the faithfulness of so many. Through your prayers, encouragement, hospitality, and giving we hope to continue this tradition by bringing other students to future IYC events. Our group is already talking about the next event, which will take place in Cincinnati, Ohio in 2026.



CONNECT

Email: zalongford@chog.org

Facebook/Twitter: [langfords3w](#)

Call: Prefer a Zoom meeting or phone call? Email us to arrange a time to connect.

PARTNER

Please Contact:

Global Strategy 800-848-2464

PO 2420, Anderson, IN 46018

Project #42.10084

<http://chogglobal.org/zalongford>

