

## CULDUTHEL CHRISTIAN CENTRE MINISTRY REPORTS 2022

### **Alpha Report**

The Alpha course offers the opportunity to explore and discuss questions of life in a relaxed way after a meal and a talk. The requirement to wear face masks was lifted on 18 April and this enabled us to commence an in-person Alpha course on 25<sup>th</sup> April. We were delighted that 22 guests signed up, two thirds of whom would not have considered themselves a committed Christian before the course. We are so grateful to all who prayed, cooked meals, made tray bakes and supported us with the technology in the auditorium. It is always interesting to learn of the varied ways that God brings people to our Alpha courses at CCC. Often it is through connections made in our outreach ministries such as the coffee shop, listening ear, messy church, community contact and the livestream Sunday service. Most often it is through the encouragement and recommendation of a Christian friend.

Aware that most of the guests started with very little knowledge of the gospel, we put in extra sessions about Jesus. We spent 5 weeks exploring the facts about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. As the course developed it became obvious that God's Spirit was at work in people's lives. The Alpha Saturday was a particular highlight where we ended the day in praise and worship with time for people to respond to God. At least one person became a Christian on the Saturday, and they were full of joy.

We think five people have put their faith in Christ for the first time and at least two more have recommitted after a long time away from the Lord. God is at work in the others too as evidenced by their desire to keep coming back for more. We recognise that we are called to make disciples and we want them to be rooted and built up in Christ. They need help to deepen their understanding of the gospel, the Bible and the Christian life. In September we started a new course called "Live, Grow, Know" on Monday evenings. We have approximately twelve guests on this course. In addition, we currently have seven people exploring baptism some of whom will be baptised at the end of September.

It is not the Alpha course that has produced this fruit, but the Lord. We are so aware that this is a work of the grace of God who continues to draw people to CCC through various outreach ministries and the warm welcome they receive at our church centre makes a big difference. We give thanks to God for the way he is drawing people to CCC and for the privilege of nurturing new life in Christ.

The Alpha team: Doreen Campbell, David Goudie, Willie Hogg, Janet Logue, Alasdair Macleod.

### **CAP**

#### **CAP Debt Centre**

Colin and I and the rest of the local CAP team would like to thank you all for your support over the last year.

It has been another successful year working at the Debt Centre here in Inverness with CAP based on the figures provided by Head office and our experiences dealing with clients.

During that year we saw 12 people and families becoming debt free. Three had been given support by CAP as they repaid their debts totaling just under £50000 and 9 through insolvency clearing the debts of over £175000.

It is tremendous for CAP to have helped these people to become free of debt and the pressures and misery that debt brings however at a spiritual level the contacts we have had with them and many others may well be used by God to bring about pardon from the debt of sin and freedom from the slavery it brings.

The numbers of people that Colin and I see each month are not high however our capacity at the Debt Centre here was running at 108% whereas the National average was 69% and Regional only 47%.

We have strengthened links with DWP and CAB and other referral agencies and comments from some of the people from these agencies that refer clients to us here have been very complimentary-all the praise though goes to him.

It is a spiritual battle and we appreciate and indeed rely on your continued prayer support.

Praise God for Peter who shared some of his experiences in dealing with Debt and poverty during covid with some MSP's.

Praise God too for the wonderful Christmas party/meal we held at CCC for CAP clients and their children. They had a wonderful time and your generosity in providing both food for the Christmas hampers and gifts for the children was greatly appreciated by the local CAP team and its clients.

One child said to Allan Dunbar "where have you been Allan you missed Santa"-forever etched in my memory.

Apart from the presence of Santa-a special thanks to Willie Hogg who shared his testimony, Donna MacMillan who organized some activities and Marion of course and a team who worked tirelessly in the kitchen.

We would also like to thank all those in the fellowship who give financially to the work of local CAP-it is greatly appreciated.

### **CAP Cabin team**

We continue to give thanks and greatly appreciate the work done by Tom Eglinton and his team for making items for sale to the local community and schools in order to help promote the work of CAP.

Duncan Dundas Debt Centre manager Inverness

## **Children & Family Ministries**

CCC's mission statement is:

With God's help we are aiming to be:

- Fully devoted followers of Jesus
- Making disciples who make a difference
- Sharing Good News in the whole of life.

These aims underpin all of the following ministries whatever day of the week they fall on.

### **Children & Families at CCC**

We thank God for the vision He has given that inspires our children and family work here at CCC. Supporting children's ministries within the church, family life and the wider church intergenerational family are all important to support a child's developing faith.

Kidzone is a just a part of this on a Sunday morning and we give all the praise to God as He has rebuilt Kidzone over the last 15 months, as we have recommenced meeting each week in-person. Throughout the year we had two Kidzone groups, (Kidzone Early Years and Kidzone P1-P6). Both groups have seen an increase in number as new families join the church and others reconnect after lockdown and at times we've struggled for floor space to sit down! The first Sunday back to church this term we had 58 children within the Kidzone groups!

Over the past year the two groups have gone on a journey through the Bible, following the timeline for *The Greatest Story Ever* – a resource designed by Andrew Ollerton and his family. Each week the team have facilitated activities where the children can explore different parts of the Bible through story, discussion, videos, activities, games and craft. Even the baby and toddlers have had a Together Time where we have read God's Word together, sung simple songs and prayed together. Prior to Covid, creche was purely childcare, with no spiritual input for the child. While modelling to families that no child is too young to have this time, it has valued the spiritual development of even the youngest children. Feedback from families has been positive of these developments.

We have encouraged families to partner with us on this journey, by sharing a link on the private Children, Youth & Families at CCC Facebook page to the family Bible course resource, which has something to watch, discuss and pray about.

The emphasis of God's Big Story has also laid foundations with the children for future Bible learning. The Timeline being a particularly good resource for linking future Bible teaching and giving it a place in time and has been used as part of all-age services too.

Families of Kidzone children also received Prayer Bags this year, which were delivered as part of CCC's Prayer Week. These contained a week's worth of prayer cards and materials for particular prayer activities which encouraged families to pray together, following the whole church themes for prayer week.

It has been a blessing to see new connections from the community spilling over into Sunday mornings, (e.g. from Baby/ Toddler groups; Good New Club) along with the arrival of new families to Inverness, not to mention new births within the congregation. The end of term celebration in June was a significant time to reflect on the past year and all that God has done through it, as He has guided us, taught us and built us up as a community. As part of this, the Kidzone children shared

some of their favourite Bible stories of the year and we all reflected on how we have a part to play in God's Big Story. Within this service, (and subsequently for those that weren't present) every child received a book, which we pray will be used at home and encourage their own journey of faith and knowledge of God.

At the beginning of this new academic year, we thank God for His provision in expanding the team. We now have 33 on the team and are able to have a third Kidzone group, but with the number of children we have there is room for more, so please continue to pray and let me know if you would be interested in joining the team.

The Babies & Toddler group are going to continue with a Together time, with a Bible story, from *The Beginners Bible*, songs and a prayer. The older two groups are focussing on the Psalms this term and exploring who God is. The focus for the sessions continues to be shared on the closed Facebook page, along with a monthly Memory Verse challenge for families to consider.

We are delighted that we have some Prayer Partners for the Kidzone team – a small group of people from the church who have committed to praying each week for the Kidzone groups. The Prayer Partners receive regular updates so that they know who is serving on the team each week, what topics are being covered and specific prayer requests. Please speak to Alison Shanks if you would like to be part of this vital ministry.

Last autumn, families also came together to do the Care for the Family course *Raising Faith*, which gave an opportunity to hear from experts, share our own experiences and explore simple ways we could weave faith into everyday family life. Feedback from families showed this was helpful and gave space to think about faith within the home. It also raised questions around the values taught at school and we were able to discuss these and signpost helpful links to aid parents' thoughts as they discuss these with their children.

Over the last year we have been exploring effective ways to learn, worship and grow in our relationship with Jesus together, as a Church family on a Sunday morning and beyond. One of the things that makes church unique is its intergenerational family and we all need one another to be built up and encouraged in our faith. Sharing time together in all-age services has facilitated teaching in different learning styles and has also given shared experiences within our church family.

Family Sundae was a new initiative last year and has provided an opportunity to intentionally build community across the ages. The all-age worship services had some teaching on the Bible and on Prayer, and within these times there were opportunities for sharing stories and testimony as we learned from one another. Following the service there was time to enjoy food and have fellowship together, whether that was by playing games or chatting or doing a craft alongside one another. Another one is planned for the end of August.

We thank God for each child and family He has brought to CCC and for each team member that has served this year and those who are part of the current team. We look to Him for His wisdom and guidance as we seek to offer opportunities that don't just teach children about God, but allow them to connect with Him and build a relationship with Him. Prayer is vital and as we look ahead we would love to build our Kidzone team, not just with those who come to help on a Sunday morning, but also with those who would love to pray specifically for our children and families at CCC and Kidzone each week. Please speak to Alison Shanks or Nicki for more information.

## **Baby & Toddler Groups**

Another weekly meeting within CCC's Children and Families work are the baby and toddler groups. Noah's Ark Tots is a committee run group that partners with CCC. Joan Carson continues to be the Chair of the group and the committee is made up of other families from the community. The group meets on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings outside in the garden. We are thankful for the provision of the shelter, which has made a massive difference to the group's activities and given a bit of protection in the cold and wet. There is an enthusiasm by those that come to meet outdoors and a recognition of how it improves their own wellbeing. We are thankful too for the kitchen team who make a hot drink for us.

The baby group meets indoors on a Thursday morning and has been very popular, operating on a booking system only. This is often the first point of contact that families are having with Culduthel Christian Centre, some having never realised that there was a church here. It has been appreciated by all those that come, as well as the community health visiting teams who signpost and refer families to us, confident that the families will receive the support and encouragement needed in these early days of family life.

Between the baby and toddler groups we have come into contact with over around 130 families (with children under 5) in the past year. The demand for these groups shows the huge missional opportunity for the church to love and serve families, to pray for them and invest time in them, walking alongside them in life. These groups are viewed as a 'sowing' ministry by aiming to support community families, reach out practically and build a community where parents / carers (and subsequently their families) feel safe, valued and loved. Alongside everyday conversations which show love, concern and Biblical wisdom, the groups also offer an introduction to the wider CCC community and links to other ministries such as Listening Ear, Messy Church, CAP are being made and it is a real encouragement to see crossover of families with Messy Church, Holiday Club and Good News Club. Some of these families are actively asking questions about our faith and the difference it makes to our lives. Others have asked for prayer regarding some of the circumstances they are in.

We thank God for the ladies on the team who are committed to serving within these groups and how Christ's love flows through them and is evident in their care for the families that come. We continue to pray that in all that we do they would see Christ in us and be drawn to Him as their own Lord & Saviour.

## **Messy Church**

Messy Church started at CCC in December 2018 and we are now planning the 18<sup>th</sup> Messy Church (including lockdown versions!) for 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022. It has met 4 times since the last AGM, each time adjusting to the different restrictions that were in place. Each Messy Church was fully booked this year and we welcomed people of all ages to come to explore different Bible themes and stories through creative activities, crafts and discussion. In October 2021 we explored the theme of our Creator God. In December we focussed on the different Christmas Journeys and the journey Jesus Himself made as He came from heaven to earth in order to go to the cross to save us. The story of the 4 friends who had faith to help their friend meet Jesus, who forgave & healed him, was told through the March Messy Church. We concluded the year with a Royal Messy Church, celebrating the Queen and the King she serves.

Some of the people who come have been involved in all Messy Churches, while others have come to Messy Church for the first time this year. One of these families have spoken positively of the

welcome they received and the activities they engaged in, which made them think about stories they hadn't thought about for a long time. There have been continued discussions around faith and following Jesus with some of the families we see midweek through the community groups. One of the families who came who are already Christians shared the importance of 'doing church' together and being able to invite friends along to this – as a whole family, rather than just the children.

We are so thankful to God for His guidance and leading over the last few years as Messy Church at CCC has started meeting. We are grateful for opportunities to share His love, build relationships with others and for the ever-expanding activities team, who are so enthusiastic each session. He has equipped us and it's been a privilege to serve Him in this creative, intergenerational ministry which supports all learning styles.

Pre-pandemic, Messy Church was establishing a pattern of meeting twice a term (once a month, term-time). As we look ahead, we hope to be able to meet more often once again to allow greater opportunities to nurture relationships and further share the meaning that God brings to this messy world.

Please pray for God's guidance as He builds this community. Please pray for creativity as we plan and for God's Spirit to be working through all elements of each session. Please pray that there would be depth of meaning and experience for all who come.

Nicki Hutchison

### **Good New Club**

Good News Club meets on a Wednesday evening for children who are aged 4 – Primary 7 from after the October holidays to March. Many of the children who come are from the community and it was a joy to welcome 65 children into Good News Club this past academic year. We are thankful for the committed team and for the families who facilitated their children's attendance each week.

Throughout the year we explored statements about who God is, firstly through the Psalms, and then by reading different Old Testament stories. We are thankful for the team of speakers who taught the children each week and for the team who led crafts, discussions, memory verses and games. It's a privilege to get to know the children, hear them pray and share their concerns with God, as well as learn memory verses and soak up and discuss what they have heard presented. Due to the implications of Covid, there were a couple of weeks where we were unable to meet in person, but a session was prepared on Sway, which was emailed home.

It has been particularly wonderful to see a good number of children in P6 and P7 coming along to GNC, some of whom have also been involved in the pioneering youth club sessions. Many families are also connected to the Holiday Club and to Messy Church. We thank God for the various ways we can connect with so many from our community.

Please pray for the forthcoming session of GNC, as plans are beginning to be made. Please pray for provision of team members to facilitate Good News Club and guidance and wisdom as a programme is written. Please pray that there will be continuing good relationships with all families who come, and that ultimately, they will know of God's love and be drawn to Him. Allan Dunbar and Esther Stephen will lead GNC this session so please contact them for any further information regarding being part of the team on a Wednesday night or if you would like to pray further for this ministry.

## **Schools Work**

At the beginning of the 2021-2022 school session, it was not possible to visit Lochardil due to restrictions that were in place. However, we are thankful that as the year has gone on, we have been able to have more face-to-face contact. It was a privilege to go back to Lochardil to participate in the Christmas assembly, sharing a Christmas Gospel message. The following term, Alasdair and I shared in the Easter assembly and it was wonderful to have some of the classes and parents join us at Culduthel Christian Centre for the Leavers Assembly in June.

In the summer term, I was also able to go and support the school Scripture Union Group, which met a handful of times as a taster block for those in Primary 5 and above. We hope that this group will be able to restart later this term. Helen and I also visited each Primary 7 class to lead a workshop thinking about Transitions, reflecting on the story of the wise man building his house on the rock and building good foundations. CCC gifted the Scripture Union resource *Your Move* to each P7 pupil as part of this workshop and both teachers and pupils spoke positively of this time.

The school is very appreciative of the love and support it receives as it partners with CCC. Please pray for a continuing open door and further opportunities in the coming year to be a Christian presence and witness within the school.

## **Holiday Club**

This year's theme was Pyramid Rock. We had between 90-100 children each day with a team of about 50 including the kitchen staff and creche team, some available the whole week and others just helping on certain days. There was amazing unity in the team and everyone gave 100%. A huge thank you to everyone who served in any way towards making Holiday Club a success including our prayer partners!

It's a busy week and we connect with many families and their children. It was encouraging to see so many of them attend the Sunday morning after holiday club and also get involved with other ministries at CCC. This year our teaching focussed on the life of Joseph and the team were encouraged to share personal testimony's each day of how Jesus is their planner, provider, helper, forgiver and king.

One of the highlights was the small group sessions. There were many deep discussions and questions as the children discovered how God worked in Joseph's life and also works in our lives today. Please continue to pray for both our team and also the children that they may grow in their faith.

I am stepping down as co-ordinator of the holiday club and we are looking for some new people to be a part of the core team and take responsibility for the overall leadership for next year. If you would like to chat about it, please get in touch! It has been an absolute honour to lead this ministry and it is just so amazing to see the way God works in so many lives.

Morag McLean

### **3C's Coffee Shop**

The Coffee shop has had an extremely busy year, with takings increasing by more than double at times. This increase was initially due to the fact that people felt more comfortable meeting in a large airy space. The extra precautions put in place post covid made folk feel that we were doing our best to ensure their safety.

Our clientele are largely introduced to the Coffee shop through friends with a church connection. Most visit regularly and many have either come to a church service or have attended church events.

Many of the Groups that take place in the church will come together in the Coffee shop for some sociable interaction. Of specific note is the young mums group run by Nicki Hutchison on a Thursday. We often see the mums in isolation during the first week, then within a few weeks they have come together with others for lunch, etc.

We have been extremely fortunate enough to have both Louise Robertson and Heather MacAskill join our team as paid members of staff. Both bring their enthusiasm and own gifts to the team and are very willing to cover and assist whenever needed.

We have lost several volunteers over the past year and struggled to recruit new ones from the church. With other ministries requiring volunteers, some have decided to move over and assist elsewhere. We now have volunteers from 7 other churches within the Inverness area. This has been a blessing and has resulted in new customers frequenting the Coffee shop. We often discuss our various services and church events and learn so much from each other.

Each day, we have someone with additional support needs assisting with support from a worker or from our team. Marion has introduced a training schedule for these volunteers, and they will receive a certificate at the end of each term. One of the support workers recently commented that she had not been in a church that did so much to connect to the community and she felt encouraged that CCC are reaching out to share Gods love in so many ways.

Most significantly, Alison Jamieson has decided to step back after 15 years of volunteering in this area. Alison was leading a team on a Tuesday and will be missed. I would like to express my immense gratitude to her for her faithfulness and hard work.

The Atmosphere amongst the team remains upbeat, despite many of the pressures of sickness, holidays, etc. It really feels like we are all united by our mutual love of God and wanting to share His love with all who come into the CCC building.



One thing to note is that there is a Church wide requirement for Food Hygiene training. Marion will try to organise this in the near future.

Marion McInnes

### **Financial Update 31/3/2022 and Current**

The accounts have been prepared for the last financial year and God has continued to supply all our needs, as you will see from those accounts.

The main source of funding for the church comes from the gift aided collections and donations from the congregation and I would like to thank you all on behalf of the leadership for your continued financial support in these difficult times.

As a leadership we would also like to thank you for your response to the various appeals that were made throughout the year and being open to the leading of his Spirit as you responded to the needs of people and Mission at home and overseas. During the course of the year £50934 was distributed as a result of these appeals and through regular giving by CCC to them.

My thanks to David Goudie and the Mission team as they prayerfully consider and guide our giving to Mission on an ongoing basis.

You helped finance too the building of the structure used by mother and toddlers that has been of such great use to them, finance too for a new gas boiler was provided and a trailer was donated to CCC for use in particular by Tom and the CAP Cabin team assisting in delivery of items made by them to customers.

It was great to see the Coffee shop reopening and it being used by so many people in the community and it being referred to as a place of peace and rest. Apart from the Coffee shop itself reopening it was also good to see the return of rental income to CCC, as this has been such an important income stream in pre covid years. My thanks in particular go to Marion McInnes our Coffee shop and bookings manager and her team.

Looking ahead as we are now about 5 months into another financial year God is continuing to bless us in so many ways not least financially. Funds have been made available by Highland council for 12 months to enable us to expend our Listening ear service into the Hilton area. This service started in Hilton on the 4<sup>th</sup> August this year.

Look out for the monthly financial statements that I prepare for the leadership team to assist in helping us all to monitor CCC finances at this time as we reach out in different ways to the community i.e. through children's ministry, youth work, CAP, Coffee shop, lunch club and Listening ear to name a few.

These help the leadership to keep track of our monthly finances and enable us all to respond as God leads.

As we expand in different areas so our costs also increase and as God has provided time and time again in the past so we believe he will do in the future.

If you wish to increase your financial giving to the work at CCC or indeed would like a bit more information as to the different ways you can give to the work here please contact me at [Duncan@churchatccc.org](mailto:Duncan@churchatccc.org)

If you are a UK taxpayer then why not consider giving via the gift aid scheme if you have not signed up for that already. Again I am happy to discuss this with you if further information required before signing a gift aid form.

Duncan Dundas-Treasurer CCC

### **Functions/ Events and Room bookings**

During Covid restrictions this area of Church life was non existent due to groups & large numbers of folk not being allowed to gather together

As people have been gaining confidence and restrictions have been lifted, function and group bookings have seen a significant increase. The types of bookings are different with very few functions requesting catering. Several of our regular bookings had a soft start, with the Camera club just re-commencing this month (Sept'22) – the first in person meeting since March 2020. All other regulars (plus 3 new regular groups) are up and running and delighted to be back at CCC.

Demand for large spaces – the main Auditorium – remain high, especially within church groups.

The rooms available for let have also seen significant change – reducing the numbers that each room can hold.

- The former Admin office, Drummond, is now set out in a Boardroom style. This has proved very successful with meetings for internal Church groups.
- The 2 rooms downstairs in the Church house have been turned into the Youth space. They can also be used for smaller groups during weekdays.
- One of the upstairs rooms has become an office for Children & Youth workers, whilst another has been set out in Boardroom style.
- Large screen TV's have now been installed in the rentable rooms which works really well for groups wanting to connect laptops, etc.

NHS will be renting out space in our main Auditorium for Vaccination clinics from Sept – Jan'23.

As more ministries are now operating from the church, demands on rooms are high. Managing the diary of bookings takes significant time but appears to be working well.

It should be noted that having Robbie Ross available to assist with setting out rooms and help with welcoming people to CCC helps alleviate the pressure when the Coffee shop is busy.

Several of the large bookings require assistance with PA and Sound. This has usually been a task undertaken by Marion. With the upgrading of both the Computer system and Sounddesk, this may be an extra pressure until training has been completed.

Marion McInnes

### **Home Groups at CCC**

The home groups were such a vital source of fellowship and community during the pandemic. Over the last year we have been grateful to resume in person fellowship. Online connection is possible and convenient. However, in line with churches across the UK we have learned over the last year that embodied fellowship provides a quality of community that cannot be experienced online.

We believe that discipleship happens most effectively in the context of community and therefore want to encourage everyone who calls CCC their church to belong to a group. We have approximately 150 people connected with a small group at CCC. About two thirds of that number are in home groups which meet on a Wednesday in various homes, apart from first Wednesday where we have a prayer meeting at CCC.

In addition to the homegroups there are a number of discipleship groups of various sizes which meet informally. For example, men's discipleship groups, ladies Bible study, groups aimed at a particular demographic – e.g. young men's Bible study group. There is also a growing number of people who are meeting in triplets to pray and encourage one another in the faith. We also have a group for those who are exploring the faith or new to the faith.

Although we highly value gathering in worship on a Sunday and the preaching of God's Word, belonging to a smaller group is the best way to grow in discipleship. In the smaller group we get to know one another better and care for each other. We can listen to each other's challenges and opportunities and then pray for one another. In the smaller group we can ask questions and seek wisdom from the Bible for the whole of life.

If you would like to be linked with a homegroup please speak to Janet Logue who will suggest a group for you to try. Pastor Alasdair would also be glad to meet you if you just want an initial chat about how best to grow in your faith this coming year.

### **Lunch Club**

The over 50s lunch club runs every Wednesday during term time. We have a great team with duties ranging from moving tables and chairs, setting tables, collecting those without transport, welcoming guests, making and serving food, washing dishes and tablecloths. Some are there every week and some help once a month in the kitchen. We also have a short talk each week and are grateful to the speakers who come along to share with us. Our guests come along with friends or come on their own to make new friends and we love to see these relationships growing deeper as time goes on. There is always a buzz of happy conversations in the room.

We had a special afternoon tea in June to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. A lot of work was put in to making this a very enjoyable afternoon and we thank all those involved. We received this encouragement from one of our team " A lady from Lunch club said she didn't have the words to

describe how she felt about the event, lunch club and the people involved. For her, in the past, religion was a series of rules and damnation and feeling not good enough. But she said we are different, we always have smiling faces". Praise the Lord! Our prayer is that many more will come to know the Lord better as they hear the messages and experience God's love in our club.

Hazel

### **Men's Ministry**

It was wonderful to be able to re-start the men's breakfasts in December 2021 after a long break. These continued up to the summer break in 2022 and were attended each time by an average of 45 guys. It was a real blessing to hear from those willing to share how the Lord had and was working in their lives. The cooking team all through included James Campbell, Arnold Maniquiz and James McGillivray along with me.

The breakfast's continue to be a good opportunity for us to get to know each other better; especially those newer to the fellowship. It has also been good to see some of us bring guests along to the breakfasts.

Summer 2022 we managed a group walk organised by Don Ferrier and also an evening was planned to spend on Angus Jamieson's and Brian Skinner's boats. Unfortunately the weather was very poor and we just sailed to North Kessock for meal then had coffee on Brian's boat back in Inverness Marina. Good fellowship was enjoyed at both events.

The plan is to have some more events arranged outside of the breakfasts and we look forward to a season of new breakfasts beginning 17 September.

We are looking at organising a men's weekend away for some time in 2023 as we did in 2018 and 2019.

Danny Muschate

### **Mission Support Team**

The Mission Support Team comprises Doreen Campbell, Katy Dobson, Jenny Wilson, Dale Peterson, Kirsteen Adams, and David Goudie. We meet regularly to pray and to consider how CCC can support and encourage Christian work in other countries. We keep in contact with our BMS partners and want to encourage global mission however we can.

#### **Our BMS partners working in Afghanistan**

Due to the ongoing situation in the country since the Taliban takeover the family plan to remain based in the UK at present. However, John\* continues to work for the partner agency in Afghanistan, and he has started regular trips to Afghanistan to supervise the projects there. We are hoping that the family may be able to visit CCC in the autumn.

#### **Peter & Louise Lynch, new BMS partners working in Bangladesh**

Simon & Wendy Hall have now left Nepal. After a process of shortlisting a number of possible new mission partners, we have recently chosen Peter & Louise as our new partners. They work in theological education, church-planting, and development work. We hope to introduce them to CCC in the coming months, probably using a pre-prepared video.

### **Afghanistan Food Forest Project**

The BMS mission partner involved in setting this project up has now travelled back to Afghanistan. We are looking to get an update from her about this project, which we sent money in support of last year after our appeal.

### **Future appeal**

The ongoing crisis in Afghanistan is less prominent in the news due to the war in Ukraine. We are looking into a potential project(s) in Afghanistan that might be suitable for us at CCC to support through an appeal later this year.

### **Operation Mobilisation**

Matthew Skirton, UK director of OM visited CCC in May and spoke to us about the Great Commission, and the work of OM.

### **Sliven**

CCC continues to partner with our sister church in Sliven, through Blythswood Care. Our 2021 Christmas appeal raised £6000 for poor people in the Sliven area in special need.

### **Pakistan**

We hosted a Zoom meeting with Jill\* last year to hear about her inspiring ministry in education in rural Pakistan.

\*names changed

David Goudie

### **Pastoral Ministries Report**

We give thanks to God for His mercy and grace towards us in this past year as we have sought to support each other after the covid pandemic. Love to one another has been shown in many ways throughout the whole church; from offering practical support with meals, offering a listening ear in the coffee shop, or meeting others in home groups to pray and read the bible together.

This care and support has been so fundamental in helping people reconnect and we are so thankful for God's provision and everyone who gives sacrificially of their time to serve and love others.

Over the past year God has indeed been faithful and as we look ahead to uncertain days, He reminds us to 'Come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.' Hebrews 4:14-16.

### **Key updates:**

Our core pastoral care team have continued to keep an overview of needs, liaising with other ministries leaders, Elders and home group leaders and connecting with those who have not returned to church and those on the fringes.

Our home groups have been continuing to meet and we have had new people join these groups where they are offered pastoral support as well as discipleship. Encouragingly, there is a growing number of smaller discipleship groups for both men and women happening across the church.

Over the past year our pastoral teams have had many opportunities to walk alongside those coping in times of great need, such as bereavement, loss, financial or family difficulties. We have been privileged to offer spiritual, emotional and practical support as we seek to love and journey with those in need.

I have had the privilege of offering one to one ministry for many women in our church and community who are facing a range of difficult life circumstances. It has been a privilege to support those new to faith or those seeking. Many of these women have also attended a fortnightly discipleship group, joined the Alpha course and are now starting a new discipleship course called Live Grow Know (by Becky Manley Pippert).

The Women4Women events have continued and played an important part in the building of fellowship after covid. The growth of prayer triplets has been key in helping strengthen the prayer life of many and in helping develop close spiritual friendships throughout the church.

In recognition of the impact of the pandemic on wellbeing we completed some equipping on understanding mental health and wellbeing. We are praying for God's leading in how we continue to support our community in this area of great need. We have had opportunities to develop relationships with local mental health teams and look forward to further developing these relationships in the year ahead.

In recognition of how many have been bereaved over the pandemic we have started a new Bereavement Journey Course as an outreach. We have eighteen people attending this course, many of whom are from the community. We are running this as a pilot and are praying for God's leading in whether we would run this course on a regular basis.

### **Shoe Box Appeal**

Last year, as in 2020, we weren't able to sort shoeboxes at CCC. It was still a difficult time but it worked well with the free use of premises on Harbour Road for a month during which time boxes to fill four lorries were sorted, packed and loaded.

The plan is to return to CCC sorting and this time for a week that starts on Monday 21 November. We will set up that morning and then be open until 9:00pm each day and finish off on Saturday morning. We aim to fill two lorries during this week including the one that will head to Sliven.

It will be really good to be back at CCC as it is a real community event that engages not only those who come to CCC but other users of the building, people in the community, schools, business groups and various others such as Guides.

We give thanks for the regular donations of fillers into the carton in the entrance and those we know who are knitting regularly.

More details will follow about the November week but we would welcome your involvement and that you encourage others you know to come along.

Thanks for your continued support with the Shoe Box Appeal.

Danny Muschate

## **Youth Ministries Report**

### **Junior Youth Fellowship**

Our Junior YF is for those aged P7-S2 and meets on Sunday mornings at the same time as Kidzone. Numbers have fluctuated somewhat over the year but we now regularly have up to 8 young people attending each week. We enjoy a mix of games, hot chocolate, and Bible study.

Between August and Christmas we followed a youth version of Christianity Explored and between January and June we explored how we might answer different questions people often have about Christianity. This term we have started a new series, 'Encounters with Jesus', looking at different characters in the Bible whose lives were changed after encountering Jesus.

The current Junior YF team consists of myself, Alan Cuthbert, Hannah Brown, Lois Hamilton, Colin & Morag Mclean and Angus & Alison Jamieson.

### **Senior Youth Fellowship**

Our Senior YF is for those in S3-S6 and meets on Sunday evenings. It has been wonderful to have again enjoyed a full school year of in-person meetings! Since Easter we have also been able to meet some weeks in church members' homes again which has been such a blessing. Our Senior YF group has been small in number this year (weekly average 3-6 young people) but this has provided opportunities for real and meaningful friendships and discussions. Alan and I have been the sole leaders of this group for the past year, we are thankful to have had Lois Hamilton join the team this term.

Over the past year we have studied the first half of Mark's gospel, a video series called 'Storylines' which explored different themes throughout the whole Bible narrative, and considered a range of subjects suggested by the young people themselves after we gave them the starter, 'What does the Bible say about \_\_\_\_\_?'. In August we began a new series looking at what the Bible can teach us about a range of relationships (e.g. friends, family, marriage).

Thank you to Ebbie Meiselbach for coming and sharing his testimony with the young people and to Angus Jamieson for providing teaching on baptism. What a joy it was to see 4 of our young people from this group baptised on 5<sup>th</sup> June.

We would also like to say a huge thank you to everyone who helps provide food and hospitality for this group. It is so appreciated by young people and leaders alike!

## **Mentoring**

8 young people have been meeting regularly with an older church member for 1:1 discipleship and mentoring. Both mentors and mentees share how beneficial they find these relationships, and we are so thankful for all the mentors who give so freely of their time. A number of those being mentored are now past school age and so our hope is that we can further this work over the coming months and see more young people taking up the opportunity.

## **Other Social Events**

Approximately once a month we organise a social event for both YF groups outside of the usual Sunday meetings. We have enjoyed activities such as bowling, trampolining, quiz nights, games nights, movie nights, crazy golf, a nerf battle and a BBQ.

It has been good to join with other youth fellowships from neighbouring churches for some of these. A particular highlight of the year was a joint churches youth weekend away to Alltnacriche in Aviemore at the end of February. 38 young people, including 15 from CCC attended and we are so grateful to Elaine Watt from Hilton Church who did the bulk of organisation and leadership of this event.

## **Youth Club**

A new youth club at CCC was launched after the Easter holidays and continues to meet each Tuesday evening during term time. Open to P7-S2 we have 26 young people regularly attending, with more names on a waiting list for when space becomes available. Many of these are from out with the CCC fellowship and the club has provided a good follow-up activity for those who have 'graduated' from Good News Club.

We make use of the Kleer Video Series – 5 minute videos for 11-14 year olds designed to spark thought and conversation about different topics relating to faith and spirituality. It has also been great to be able to develop the downstairs of the Church House building into a more youth friendly space.

A huge thank you to those who served on the youth club team in its inaugural term, and to all those who have recently got involved.

## **Inverness Royal Academy**

We have had opportunity to lead assemblies at Christmas and Easter in the school. At Easter these were able to be face to face again for the first time in over 2 years. It has been great to work alongside other local churches and ministers in this.

I have also had opportunity to support a small group of S1 and now S2 pupils in a weekly nurture group, alongside Academy staff. This has allowed for a weekly presence in the school and for more meaningful relationships to be built with the pupils and staff involved in this.

The school has invited local churches to restart a lunchtime drop-in in the building that was previously led by Jonathan Fraser when he was working as the youth worker at Hilton



Church. Presently we do not feel able to take this on due to other commitments, but it would be wonderful if this is something we could be involved in in the future.

Dale and Marjorie have also been approached by the school to explore running money courses for pupils again. Sadly, this wasn't possible this term due to timetabling, but we are hopeful that this opportunity will present itself again soon.

### **Prayer Points**

- Give thanks for how different ministries have been rebuilt and developed over the past year following covid restrictions.
- For the ongoing discipleship of all young people connected to our fellowship, especially those not currently involved with YF groups.
- For a deepening of relationships across the different ministries, especially in Senior YF where numbers attending remain low.
- That God would work through the material we are using to help the young people engage with and be excited by what the Bible has to say.
- For ongoing opportunities to connect with young people in our community, and the relationship between CCC and Inverness Royal Academy.
- For those involved in the mentoring programme, and that more young people would take up this opportunity.
- For those involved in leading the different groups, especially those who have recently joined the youth teams. Please pray for a smooth transition of leadership when I go on maternity leave at the end of 2022.