

## CULDUTHEL CHRISTIAN CENTRE MINISTRY REPORTS 2021

### CAP

#### **Inverness Debt Centre**

CAP were able to reach agreement with the FCA early in 2020 to enable client's to be helped over the phone with Debt issues over the course of 3 calls rather than 3 visits due to the covid problem.

Colin McLean the other Debt coach in our Debt Centre and myself were therefore able to contact client's who had been referred to us by the CAP team at Bradford and assist them over the course of the 3 calls to follow the recommended option prepared for them by CAP to become debt free.

It was great to hear the comments from local people who had become Debt free as the pressure was lifted from them.

"God blessed me with CAP and they saved my life. CAP gave me and my girls a new beginning" and "Working with CAP caused my anxiety to vanish. I could sleep soundly in the knowledge that there was a solution".

We also continued to have many opportunities over the phone to pray with client's and show them that there is a God who cares for them.

We would like to thank Allan Dunbar as CAP Ambassador and the local CAP support team for continued support and encouragement in what has been a difficult year due to the covid situation.

Allan continued to develop links with Job Centre plus and have found them to be very supportive of our work.

We continued to pray regularly for client's together as a team on zoom and witnessed God transform lives as some of the local client's stories give testimony to-Kayleigh, Peter and Andrew are a few of these-praise God.

It is a spiritual battle that we are in each day and we value the prayers of the fellowship on an ongoing basis.

The Christmas hamper appeal was a bit different in 2020 than in previous years due to covid. Rather than asking for donations of food for the hampers we asked if monetary gifts could be provided and our team would then purchase the food for the hampers.

Your generosity was overwhelming and a figure of £2495 was raised.

The response from individuals and families who received the hampers was truly humbling.

We would like to thank you for the tremendous response.

In January 2021 we held a CAP Sunday where the CAP team led the Sunday morning service.

It was a great opportunity to promote the work of CAP in this area and to try and enlist additional support to our local team.

We would also like to thank those within the fellowship who give regularly to the work of local CAP and indeed the Scottish government who assisted us this year financially by way of Bursary Grant funding.

If you know of anyone in need of Debt help why not encourage them to contact the New client enquiry team number on 08003280006 or talk to myself, Colin or Allan in the first instance.

Duncan Dundas-CAP Inverness Debt Centre Manager

### **CAP Cabin team**

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

They are a great example to all and it has been particularly difficult for them during covid.

### **CAP Money**

Because of Covid, all our regular work in school and proposed Life Group project, has been cancelled. However we have helped and continue to be available to help people on a one-to-one basis, with money management and budgeting using the CAP Money method. We now find it preferable, in fact, to work with people on a one-to-one basis as it allows a more detailed and tailored approach to helping them manage their spending and saving. With the current level of uncertainty in the next few months, we plan to continue to be available in this way to anyone who could benefit from the CAP money approach to spending and saving.

Marjorie and Dale Peterson.

## **Mission Support Team**

The Mission Support Team are Doreen Campbell, Dale Peterson, Jenny Wilson, Katy Dobson, Kirsteen Adams & David Goudie (chair). We aim to promote, encourage, support and pray for CCC's involvement in mission around the world.

### **BMS World Mission**

- CCC has continued to support our 2 BMS World Mission partner families: Simon & Wendy in Nepal, and our partner family working in Afghanistan. Simon & Wendy have now completed their service in Nepal and our Afghanistan partner family had to return to the UK in August due to the current security situation in the country.
- In March CCC raised £5700 for the Afghanistan Food Forest project. Planting had already taken place before the recent security instability happened.
- In March, coinciding with the Food Forest Project Appeal, we heard from one of the BMS World Mission 'ambassadors' about the work in Afghanistan.

### **Sliven**

- We continue to partner with our sister church in Sliven, Bulgaria, through our links with Blythswood.

The church continues to support other mission organisations financially: Blythswood, Open Doors, Compassion, Solas, & Brother Andrew.

### **Looking ahead**

- We hope to get updates from BMS partners who have recently had to leave Afghanistan, including an update on the Food Forest project and to keep this country as a focus of our prayers at CCC
- With the end of Simon & Wendy's term of service in Nepal, we are starting to consider who else CCC might support instead.

Finally, the MST is always keen to hear about mission work around the world that CCC might want to consider partnering with in some way: so do get in touch with one of us if there is something you'd like us to explore further. Also, as travel restrictions ease (God-willing), if anyone is considering a mission-related trip, please let us know so we can support you.

David Goudie

## **Pastoral Care and Listening Ear at CCC**

Offering the gift of a 'Listening Ear' has always part of all the ministries at CCC. Our ultimate prayer is that as people are listened to they will experience God's love and grace and come to know and put their trust in Him. As God's people we have experienced God's mercy and His gracious listening towards us. In turn we want to listen well, love each other and those in our community. We can echo the words of Psalm 116 'I love the Lord because He has heard my voice and my cry for mercy. Because He inclined His ear to me therefore I will call on Him as long as I live'.

## **Pastoral Care – Church Family**

Since the last AGM we have continued to work together with the Elders and the Pastoral Care Team to get alongside and love people in our church and community during the COVID19 pandemic. During the latest lockdown we continued to reach out to the church with phone calls, door stop visits and garden meet ups. We endeavoured to keep in touch in a variety of ways, working with the Elders and Pastoral Care Team to offer keeping in touch phone calls to the church family. We also had opportunities to reach out to the local community and those connected to our church through care packs, 'love gifts' and encouragement cards.

Since coming out of lockdown the team have been seeking to get alongside those who are more isolated or disconnected. In the summer we arranged Garden Get Together and enjoyed fellowship with those who hadn't been able to come back to church. The team have been able to get alongside many people who have been facing very challenging circumstances in this past year. We also encourage care for one another and enable people to link in with their Link Elder or home group network. Those who are not able to do this are offered support from the team. This support could involve 1:1 Bible studies or discipleship, practical support, support with connecting with other agencies or befriending and social support.

As part of my role I am privileged to also be able to offer more specialist pastoral support and ministry for women in the church and community for more complex life issues. Each week I have opportunity to see a substantial number of women on a 1:1 basis. In addition, this past year we have been continuing to promote and link women into prayer triplets and run a bible study for women who are new Christians or seekers.

## **Future Plans**

As a pastoral care team we are continuing to look at how we can reach out in the coming two terms. We hope to run another Women4Women meeting in October on the theme of Rising Strong through prayer and worship after COVID19. We would like to encourage and strengthen prayer triplets and prayer ministry for women in the church, as well as widening the opportunities for discipleship by running more specialist discipleship groups. We continue to work together as a pastoral care team, alongside the Elders, and plan to have more equipping sessions on various topics including on whole life discipleship and equipping on how we care for and love one another as a church family. As a team we will work with the Elder to strengthen home groups and encourage discipleship for people at all stages of their walk with Christ.

## **Listening Ear – Outreach Pastoral Support**

Since 2018 we have been offering a Listening Ear service to people our community and wider city. The team now consists of six team members. We are also really pleased to now have a male team member who will offer support to the increasing number of men phoning into our service. Due to the COVID19 pandemic we stopped offering the drop-in listening service and moved to telephone support. During lockdown we had an approximately eight people being offered listening sessions each week. People phoning in were asking for support with a variety of issues including mental health difficulties, loneliness, bereavement and loss. Some of these people had no other support or no one else to talk to in the week and the Listening Ear offered a vital life line bringing hope and encouragement. The team have also had opportunities to discuss their faith and testify of their faith in Christ. Please pray for the team as they faithfully listen and show God's love each week.

Now that we are moving into a different phase with the pandemic there are many opportunities to expand and develop the listening service we offer. We would like to restart and re-promote the drop-in service. The team are working on developing a sign-posting document and building up resources that people can access when they drop-in. We have made a connection with a local GP practice, they are very keen to work with us and refer patients. We have had links with Lochardial Primary school about offering listening to parents and we hope to take this forward this term after we train more new members of the team. We would also like to expand our drop-in to offering a Well-being Renew group, where people who are lonely or struggle with mental health can access a safe place to come to, be listened to and access a Prayer Space.

Our Listening Ear Team are also keen to support our existing church ministries and offer listening to parents who access Messy Church or Good News Club. The pastoral care team will work alongside Nicki and Helen to offer more specialised pastoral support to children, families and youth both in the church and community.

Please pray for us that God would enable us to make the most of the opportunities to reach out with His love and hope at a time when many are weary, anxious or without hope after the pandemic. Pray for unity, energy, vision and grace as we go forward in these coming months.

Janet Logue (Pastoral Coordinator / Listen Ear Ministry)

## **Children's Ministries**

Since the last AGM lockdown restrictions have continued to impact the children and families activities at CCC and beyond. However throughout the last year there has been a small and dedicated team who have continued to seek to encourage and equip our children and families.

Last year when we were unable to meet together in person weekly suggestions were put up on the website. These were linked to the Sunday online services and hopefully helped families with children to engage with the Sunday morning sermon in a way that was relevant to them.

At the start of 2021 the church had a week long prayer focus based around the Fruit of the Spirit and our motto verses for the year. As part of that week prayer suggestions were also given to aid children and families to pray together.

In February 2021 Family Zoom sessions began. Each Sunday after the morning online service families were invited to come together virtually. Each week one of the Kidzone team shared a bible story, led a quiz or interactive game and suggested a craft or activity based on the week's theme that the children could do. Throughout these Family Zoom sessions we made use of some great material from the Scottish Bible Society – the Wonder Walks series leading up to Easter and then the Meals with Jesus series based from Luke.

As restrictions eased in April 2021 we had our first face to face session back at the church, followed by another one in May. In two different age related groups we met together outside to play games, hear the bible and take part in a range of activities. It was so lovely to see families meeting together again and to see the children enthusiastically listening and responding to God's word.

From June 2021 we have been able to gather together again on Sunday mornings as a wider church family and we have continued to meet in Kidzone in two separate age groups. The Kidzone Early Years is for all pre-school children and the older Kidzone group covers children in Primary 1 - Primary 6. Part of the reason for meeting like this has been due to the reduced numbers of Kidzone and crèche teams available to help on Sunday mornings.

As the new school term starts we are beginning a journey through the whole bible that will continue all the way until next summer. We are looking forward to discovering together more about the Greatest Ever Story. We are encouraging families to join us as we explore God's Word together by doing a session of the Family Bible Course during the week. Each of these short family sessions gives families the opportunity to watch, read, chat and pray over a section of the bible. We pray that whole families will enjoy learning together and be encouraged in their faith.

Recently a closed Facebook page has been set up for families with children and young people who come to CCC. The aim of this Facebook group is to connect the families of children and young people at CCC and be a place to find out what's going on, share useful resources for family life and to build community with one another.

Unfortunately Good News Club was not able start back as expected in October 2020 due to the lockdown restrictions. However the team sought to run an amended Good News Club with smaller numbers starting in January 2021. To their great disappointment the club was unable to proceed due to increased government restrictions coming into place at the start of the year. However around Easter some members of the team delivered a small gift bag to children who had connected with Good News Club in the past as a way of blessing these families.

Thanks also must be given to the pastoral team who generously and tirelessly made up and delivered family packs to many of our church families throughout the last year.

Nicki Hutchison started as the Children and Families Worker in June 2021. She would love to hear from you if you wish to get involved in the children's ministries at CCC or if you have any suggestions or comments.

Please continue to pray for the work with children and families through CCC asking God to raise up people to become involved in this ministry and for wisdom for the team as they seek to encourage more families to reconnect with CCC. Please pray for our children - that seeds planted through the different ministries will grow and be supported and that these children will bear fruit where they are as they grow in love for Jesus.

### **Messy Church**

In the last report, we shared we were planning two identical in-person Messy Church services for December 2021. What an answer to prayer those services were. Restrictions made it look entirely different from previous Messy Church times, with no food, family zones to ensure physical distancing, facemasks, and no singing. However, there remained creative opportunities to explore God's Word, discussion, prayer, shared worship (facilitated by Makaton) and intergenerational community experience as we celebrated and gave thanks for Jesus' birth and God's loving plan to rescue us.

As families entered the church, there were shared stories of the experiences of 2020. Two families who were returning for the first time talked about a sense of "coming home." It also offered an opportunity for new families to connect with the Church in-person. We left the first session thankful and excited about possibilities to continue meeting together, only to return home to the news of a further lockdown from 26th December. We entered the second session grateful for opportunities to meet together, savouring the sweetness of fellowship and trusting God for what lay ahead.

Over 2021 we have continued to reach out to families attending Messy Church through Care packages and an Easter bag, kindly prepared by the Pastoral Care team. We are so thankful for the wider CCC team that facilitates these interactions.

We are also very thankful to God for Graeme, Emily, Archie and Daniel Hamilton who have been part of the Messy Church planning team. We continue to be encouraged by them and share ideas and prayers for future plans.

Looking ahead, we are excited to be planning a Messy Church for 2nd October and 4th December. We pray that this will be an opportunity to continue connections with many families from Messy Church, Good News Club, Holiday Club and toddler groups, as well as open opportunities to reach others in the community. Please pray for God's guidance as we plan and please get in touch with us if you would like to be involved – the team works best with a variety of ages, stages and giftings.

Joan Ross & Nicki Hutchison

### **Baby and Toddler Groups**

Noah's Ark Tots has existed at Culduthel Christian Centre for many years and is often the first point of contact a family may have with the Church.

The group's first aim, as stated in the constitution adopted in 2009 is:

"For the church to show Christian love, concern and care to families with young children within the community."

Over the past year the committee has been delighted that the group have been able to continue meeting in various forms. Last autumn / winter outdoor groups were permitted to meet, and many families were thankful for opportunities to reconnect and meet others, especially after the difficulties of lockdown. Children too, were able to mix and play in a way that had been restricted previously. At the start of 2021 lockdown prohibited groups from meeting, but as a member of Care and Learning Alliance, the group was able to ask their Family Support Practitioner to give online sessions. This happened twice a week – once for Toddler families with the other session being particularly for families with babies. Noah's Ark Tots committee recognised the real need that new families had and, when restrictions eased, were able to facilitate baby buggy walks with the support of CALA and a couple of volunteers from the Church.

Nicki has continued to facilitate this baby group which is now meeting indoors with the use of the garden. It has been appreciated by all those that come, as well as the health visiting teams who signpost and refer families to it.

As restrictions eased in the spring, Noah's Ark Tots were once again able to meet outdoors and a decision was made by the committee, in consultation with the families attending, to continue meeting outdoors. Outdoor play has a huge variety of benefits and there was a consensus that there was no such things as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing. The committee want to recognise and thank the church for their continued support and partnership in baby and toddler groups for the community, in particular their willingness as the group develops the garden area. One of these developments has been kick-started with a Scottish Government grant awarded to the group for building infrastructure, such as a shelter and picnic tables, that would support more outdoor play opportunities throughout the seasons, benefiting the health and wellbeing of children and adults alike. Those that come have been suggesting ideas of things to develop and various play and learning activities, which increases ownership of the group and a sense of community. One attendee has said, "I always feel better for being there. He [the child] is learning about being with others, I have had a chance to chat to others and everyone is friendly. You realise you are not alone. Even in the rain I smile when I'm here."

Please pray for these connections with young families, that as they are part of our wider CCC community, they would be aware of and come to know of God's love for them.

Joan Carson (Committee Chair person) & Nicki Hutchison



## **Youth Ministries**

### **Junior YF**

Our Junior YF is for those aged P7-S2 and meets on Sunday mornings. From February-May this was held via zoom but since June we have been able to meet in person again during the morning services. We have just begun a new course, 'CY', a version of Christianity Explored designed for this age group. Through study of Mark's gospel, the course intends to help young people 'see why' Jesus is worth following.

We give thanks for all who have helped lead Junior YF in the past but have recently stepped down from this ministry, and for those who have recently joined the team.

### **Senior YF**

Over the past year our Senior YF group for those in S3-S6 have had a mixture of online and in person meetings, as restrictions have allowed. As we transitioned back to in person meetings in the final term before summer, we ran a series of youth services in the main auditorium. It was wonderful to see some of the young people serving at these services through leading worship and controlling the computer and sound desk.

Since August we have been able to return to meeting on Sunday evenings at CCC. It has been great to see some familiar faces returning, and also a few new ones. We are now also able to provide food again which as I am sure you can imagine has been met with great delight!

This term we are studying the gospel of Mark together, discovering more about who Jesus is and how we can live with him as King of our lives.

### **Mentoring**

There are currently 9 young people 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.

### **Prayer Points**

- For all of the young people, who have missed out on many things during the pandemic.
- For the rebuilding of relationships. We plan to run some social events over the next few months to help build community and fellowship.
- 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 opportunities for outreach to young people in the community and vision on how to take this forward.
- For those involved in leading the different groups, especially those who have recently joined the team.
- For those involved in the mentoring programme, and that more young people would take up this opportunity.