

How your support is transforming lives.



Continuing connection

Looking ahead

Charles, our Chief Exec, outlines the challenges and opportunities amidst lockdown and pandemic.

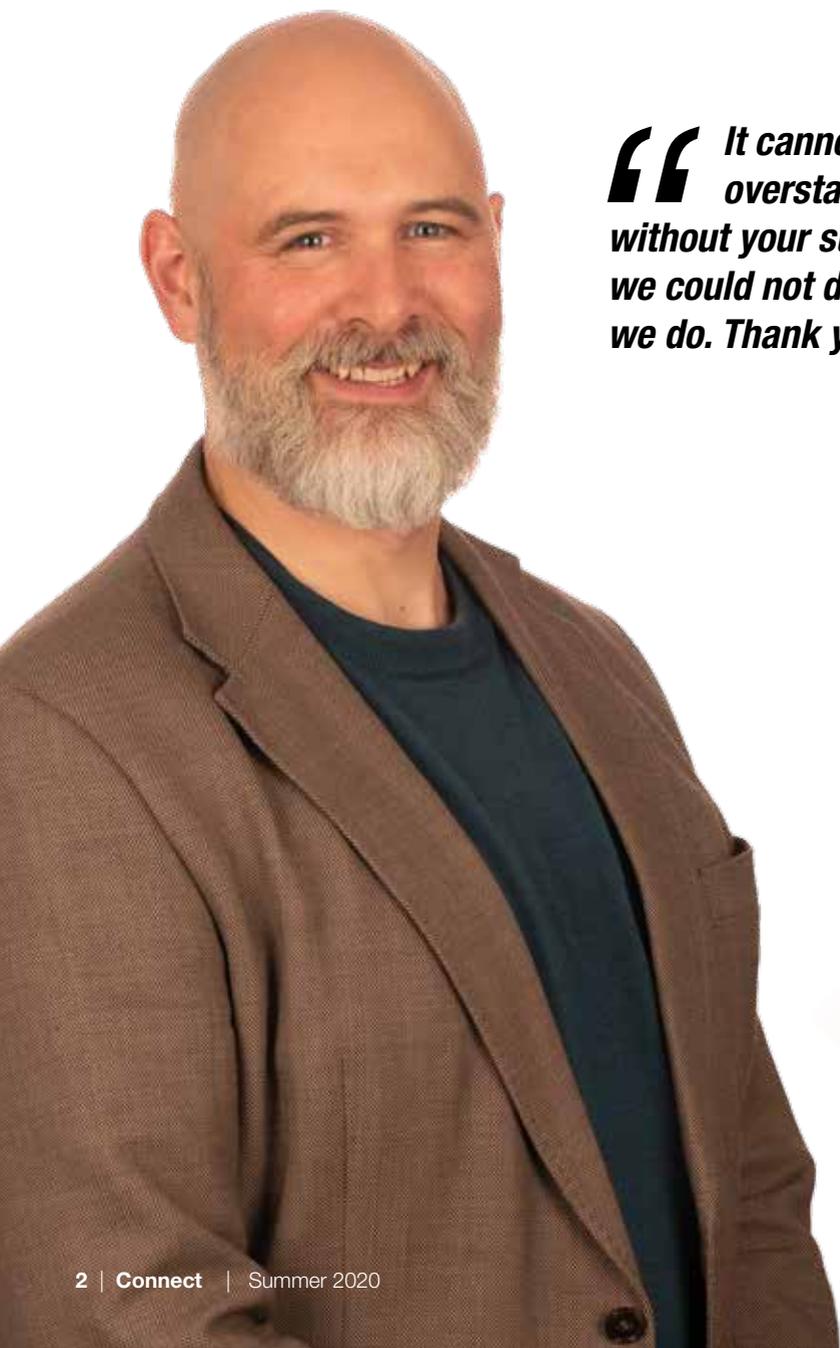
Reach for the stars

We've been helping our nursery children fulfil their potential while they're at home.

Deepening relationships

Socially distanced walks are improving guests' mental health and strengthening relationships.

The road ahead



“ It cannot be overstated that without your support we could not do what we do. Thank you.

Charles Maasz, our Chief Executive, outlines the challenges, blessings and opportunities for Glasgow City Mission as we respond to the impact of Covid-19 on people already affected by homelessness and poverty.

What have been the main challenges of lockdown on our work?

The toughest part has been a lack of human connection. We're community beings and even if we experience fragmentation within, we can be held together when we have community. We have seen networks and personal relationships strained and we have also been aware that some of our guests are struggling, which can be very distressing.

What positives have you taken from the last 12 weeks?

The positives are probably the flip side of the challenges. We have seen that people, when everything is stripped away, desire to be known, to be in relationship and within that setting to search for meaning and purpose. The pandemic on one level has reminded us that we are all fundamentally the same.

Do you think God has been saying anything in particular to the Mission during lockdown?

I truly believe that God is saying that we have to strip back the window dressing so we can focus on community, connection and belonging. As staff and volunteers, we need to surrender to Christ and spend time with Him so we can better care for others.

What are the main things to consider as we plan ahead?

It is crucial in my view that we don't use the language of 'when things get back to normal'. What was is past and what will be is hard to read – we have to learn to deal with uncertainty and change. Attributes that will stand us in good stead will be adaptability, innovation, creativity and the courage to step into the unknown.

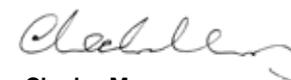
Those who we'd consider disadvantaged will likely find themselves set further behind, whether they be children whose parents are not well placed to offer structure and education, or those whose jobs and relationships have been affected. The societal factors that are known to perpetuate inequality are being exacerbated due to Covid. Time will likely reveal that the need for the church will be greater than ever going forward.

What are your hopes for the next six months?

I hope that in six months' time we are able to serve dinners, meet friends, gather in our buildings and re-welcome all of our friends who consider us part of their lives. I hope that our Child and Family Centre is full of the laughter of the local children and that new ministry opportunities abound for us all!

Do you have a message for our supporters?

It cannot be overstated that without your support we could not do what we do. Thank you for your ongoing support and endorsements. The times ahead will be challenging and we will do all we can to ensure that our city's most vulnerable people are well cared for.



Charles Maasz
Chief Executive

Reach for the stars

Our nursery might have been closed during lockdown, but we've been finding ways to stay in touch with the children – to encourage them to keep learning and fulfil their potential.

Debs, the Lead Practitioner of Attainment at our Child and Family Centre, has been posting short videos on Facebook to help children with their learning. Feedback from the parents has been positive and they are enjoying being part of their children's education.

"One of the boys in nursery has absolutely loved seeing a friend who is in his key group signing on Facebook (in a video we'd taken pre-lockdown)," says Debs. "Another family told me how they are grateful for the videos because they hadn't known the words to a song their child sang, but seeing it on Facebook has meant they are now able to sing along."

We have also delivered home learning packs to the nursery children and every child in nursery has been sent a hand written letter encouraging them and letting them know we are missing them.

Debs says, "Parents have been sending in pictures of things their child has made from the learning packs. I have also been phoning families each week to see how they are getting on."

"It is so important to stay connected to the children and families we work with during lockdown because we want the best for them. We want them to know they are valued and not forgotten about."

Closing the gap

We have been seeing results in the nursery thanks to having had a Practitioner for Attainment in post for the past two years. Staff know the strengths of the children and are also aware of the areas where they need more encouragement. We have seen children grow in confidence and their love of learning increase.

Children from low-income households traditionally do less well at school than those from financially better-off homes. Debs' work at the Child and Family Centre helps us to give children the best possible start in life. She works with staff and children to improve literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

Debs says, "Messy play, which can involve things like shaving foam, playdough and painting, helps develop motor skills. We've seen a child get so excited because they managed to write the first letter of their name in shaving foam. There was another child who was very shy and wasn't interested in messy play. Through being given lots of opportunities and encouragement they began to investigate and explore and now absolutely love painting and playing with playdough."

Summer plans

As lockdown restrictions ease, we are making plans for safely meeting with families. At the time of writing we are planning to have socially distanced picnics and games in the park in small groups and to create family activity packs for families to complete together. Anne, Child and Family Centre Manager, says, "We've really been missing everyone and we're looking forward to our summer activities so we can catch up with families."

We've been staying in touch with families by phone, but are looking forward to being able to catch up properly face to face over the summer. This will also give Margaret, our Adults Worker, and Dads Worker James a better idea of what the needs of individual families are.

Our nursery will reopen for the new term in line with government guidance and we hope to start some of our other groups around the same time.

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for the latest Child and Family Centre news.



We want the best for them. We want them to know they are valued and not forgotten about.

Deepening relationships

“ I was used to seeing Linda daily, even just for a coffee, so that was difficult when lockdown happened – walks have been good for that connection.”



As lockdown eases, we’re enjoying being able to see our guests face to face for socially distanced walks. Soon we hope to be able to meet in small groups.

Sophia has been enjoying meeting Linda, Project Worker. She says, “Walks make a big difference. I don’t like walking in an area I don’t know well by myself, so having someone meet me gets me out for a change in my day.

“I enjoy chatting, getting out for fresh air and just seeing a familiar face. It helped my mental health going for a walk and I look forward to going on them in the future till the building reopens. I was used to seeing Linda daily, even just for a coffee, so that was difficult when lockdown happened – walks have been good for that connection.”

We first met Sophia when she arrived at the night shelter this winter. The Council’s homelessness casework team, who work from the night shelter, got her quickly into accommodation and she started coming to our city centre project for food. From here she started coming to our weekly ladies coffee morning and Bible study.

She says, “Not gathering for the coffee morning has been difficult, not seeing people. I have missed just popping down to the building. I was about to volunteer in the laundry room and I miss not being able to do that.

“Through the phone calls and video calls I am ok. In the early days of Covid-19, the Mission helped by getting food packages. They kept Bible study going online which has been good and also getting calls from volunteers at the weekend was nice for me. Just having someone check on me has helped me through lockdown.”

Phoning guests and going for walks has helped us get to know our guests better and has deepened some of the relationships.

Simon, assistant Project Manager, says, “My last two walks have been really encouraging. Lockdown has been difficult but it seems to have opened some of the guys up. Both guests who I walked with last week in some way expressed their love.

“One messaged after the walk to say, ‘I love you bro.’ The other, at the end of our walk, said, ‘I’ll love you and leave you mate.’ These are two guys who don’t normally express their emotions. I’ve not really heard them talk like this before. I was surprised and hugely encouraged. I think they know we are there for them. We are consistent and it’s opening up their hearts to express more of what they really feel.”

Deliveries

As well as the phonecalls and walks, we have delivered more than 650 food parcels to people in their homes since the start of lockdown. We’ve also been giving our guests items such as guitars and sheet music from our music studio, dumbbells from our gym, art packs, recipe books and even bikes. These items are helping our guests deal with the boredom of lockdown and pursue the activities they have enjoyed in our building. We look forward to being able to start some of these activities again in small groups. See page ten for our plans for restarting some services as we exit lockdown.

Please pray

Please keep our guests in your prayers, as they continue to deal with the challenges of lockdown. Give thanks for answered prayers and deepening relationships.

News round-up

> Graduations

In June, we celebrated the graduation of 13 students from the classes we run in partnership with City of Glasgow College. Students graduated in subjects including IT and employability skills. The graduation ceremony was, of course, on Zoom.

Impressively, three of the students for whom English is not their first language completed their qualifications during lockdown, and two of them were on mobile phones due to not having laptops.

> Going to school

We are delighted that one of the children who graduated from our nursery in Govan this summer has a place in a specialised school where they will receive the support they need to flourish. Our team worked hard with the parents and authorities to make this happen. There are also 20 children graduating from the nursery to mainstream schools.

> Baptisms

Three of our guests recently received places in a residential rehab, where they are doing well. In June they were baptised outdoors in a service livestreamed on Facebook. We're delighted they have taken this step of faith.

> Online connections

Our weekly Gathering has moved online. This is our informal and interactive church service. It is now being livestreamed on Facebook every Friday at 2pm and you're very welcome to join us! We've also moved our Bible studies online. Marion, Glasgow City Mission Chaplain, says, "We are discovering amazing unity amongst believers from many different countries as we study and pray with one another. Together, we are being taken into each other's lives in ways we could never have imagined." And, new for lockdown, is a weekly and increasingly competitive quiz every Wednesday, also on our Facebook page.

> Point of contact



People often call us when they don't know where else to turn. We have set people up to get their prescriptions and shopping delivered or to receive regular food parcels from local foodbanks and churches. Someone contacted us about their dad, who is vulnerable. We delivered regular food parcels until we could link them up with a local foodbank and our team has been phoning him every week for a chat.

Pray with us

- > Please pray for wisdom, creativity and boldness for our Board and management team as they plan ahead in a quickly changing environment. Pray we will find ways to meet the needs of our guests.
- > Pray for our facilities team whose work will be key to reopening our building safely. Pray for their encouragement and protection.
- > Pray for those of our guests who have been finding it difficult to cope during lockdown. Pray that as we start to meet up with them again that this would have a positive impact on their mental health.
- > Give thanks for our international guests whose asylum claims have been successful. Give thanks that these cases have been progressed during lockdown. Pray too for those of our international guests who are worried about the impact of Covid-19 on their friends and families in their home countries.
- > Pray that we will be able to deliver a fun but safe summer programme from our Child and Family Centre in Govan and that it will be a real blessing to families.

More online

Stay up to date with our latest news and plans on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.



www.glasgowcitymission.com



Meeting need



At the time of writing this magazine, Scotland has just started phase two of the process of exiting lockdown. Our plans are dependent on the timing of the various phases. As Charles says in his interview on page two, attributes that will stand us in good stead will be creativity and innovation.

All the plans outlined here are subject to change as we adapt to the emerging needs of our guests and government guidance.

Our main aim, while keeping our guests and staff safe, is to provide the connection and community which our guests crave. We've been enjoying **socially distanced walks** as part of phase one. As we move through the various phases, we hope to be able to meet in **small groups** outside for conversation, Bible study and some of the activities guests would previously have enjoyed at Urban.

We've been aware for a while that many of our guests struggle with their mental health. This has only been exacerbated by lockdown. Anthea, a former Project Worker, is a qualified counsellor and has started **one-to-one counselling sessions** for our guests as our Counsellor.

Hospitality and sharing food with our guests is a central part of our work. We hope to be able to start serving **takeaway meals** from our building soon. In time, we look forward to having small groups eating together in our building. As we do so we will start to phase out the delivery of groceries.

See pages four to five for summer plans for our **Child and Family Centre**. We look forward to being able to share more detailed plans with you as time goes on.

Please follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for our latest news.

Respond

"I want to transform lives in Glasgow"

1 I'd like to set up a monthly donation

The sum of £3 £12 £24 £36 £50 Other £ _____ every month

On the 1st 15th of every month, starting in _____ MONTH _____

Account holder: _____

Account number: _____ Sort code: _____

Charities Aid Foundation processes donations on our behalf and will send you a Direct Debit Guarantee and advanced notice letter before your first donation.



I'd like to give a one off gift of £ _____

I enclose a cheque (payable to Glasgow City Mission) Or Please debit my card

Card No: _____ Expiry: _____ Start: _____

Security code (last 3 digits on the reverse of your card): _____

Please tick here if you do **not** require a receipt.

2 Title: _____ First name: _____ Surname: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Tel: _____

Where did you receive this copy of Connect: _____

giftaid it

I want to make my gift worth 25% more at no extra cost.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

We'll not share your details with any third parties for the purposes of their marketing or phone you to ask for more money. We'd like to let you know the impact of your support but if you don't want to hear from Glasgow City Mission in the future, tick here .

3 Please send me more information about:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> volunteering | <input type="checkbox"/> booking someone to speak at my church/group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fundraising | <input type="checkbox"/> arranging a visit to Glasgow City Mission |
| <input type="checkbox"/> leaving a gift in my will | <input type="checkbox"/> I want to receive prayer news by email |

Email: _____

Completed forms can be posted to: 'Freepost, Glasgow City Mission'

Get social

In a fast changing world, stay right up to date with all our news and activities.

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for videos, news, prayer requests and more.



0141 221 2630
info@glasgowcitymission.com
www.glasgowcitymission.com

Registered charity SC001499. Registered office:
20 Crimea Street, Glasgow, G2 8PW.

