

How your support is transforming lives.

Building relationship



Our new Chief Executive

Charles Maasz reflects on his hopes for his role and the future direction of Glasgow City Mission.

Salt of the earth

A Bible study group is proving a lifeline for men who have been through the prison system.

Whole family

We now have a Dads Worker at our Child and Family Centre, enabling us to work with the whole family.

Introducing our new Chief Executive

Charles Maasz, our new Chief Executive, reflects on the life events which have led him to this role. He shares his hopes for the future direction of Glasgow City Mission as we seek to stay focused on the ministry Jesus points us to.

My walk of faith has brought me to a place of ministry which is so close to my heart that when I pause to consider it, I am blown away!

I came to Christian faith in July 1997 in a house church in a scheme on the outskirts of Bristol. I was 26. I had recently been homeless, was housed in an unfurnished flat and had become substance dependent. Mentally I was in bad shape and I was making bad life choices.

The Lord restored my life rapidly after that 1997 encounter. I was baptised and immersed myself in the Bible – receiving support from the community of faith. It was not at all plain sailing, but I felt God near and that I was truly ‘made new’. The Lord has shown me great favour.

In my new role of Chief Executive, I have been made aware of the scale of the shoes Grant has left for me to try and fill! In my first months I am trying to become acquainted with the array of projects that we are involved in, which include local policy and international strategies. These are society-shaping discussions where we have a place at the table. Some of the policies and strategies being adopted are a direct consequence of Grant’s work and passion and a testament to his skill and hard work.

This causes me to reflect deeply on where my sights will be centred once I’ve developed a proper sense of the terrain. Each previous Chief Executive has brought a distinct flavour. I shall not make the mistake of trying to do what Grant did – I cannot.

But with the help of hugely experienced managers and staff teams, and the backing and support of a diverse and gifted Board of Trustees, I know that we can continue to build on great foundations.

Our Board is keen to take a constructive role in the shaping of our next five-year strategy, planning for which is well underway and will be implemented from 2020. We expect that partnerships will feature strongly in our next steps. We will likely seek to increase our presence and reach into areas of the city which cannot be covered by our city centre project. And, of course, we are moving forward with the development of a new Child and Family Centre in Govan, where we have thrived for many years under the leadership and passion of Anne and her team.

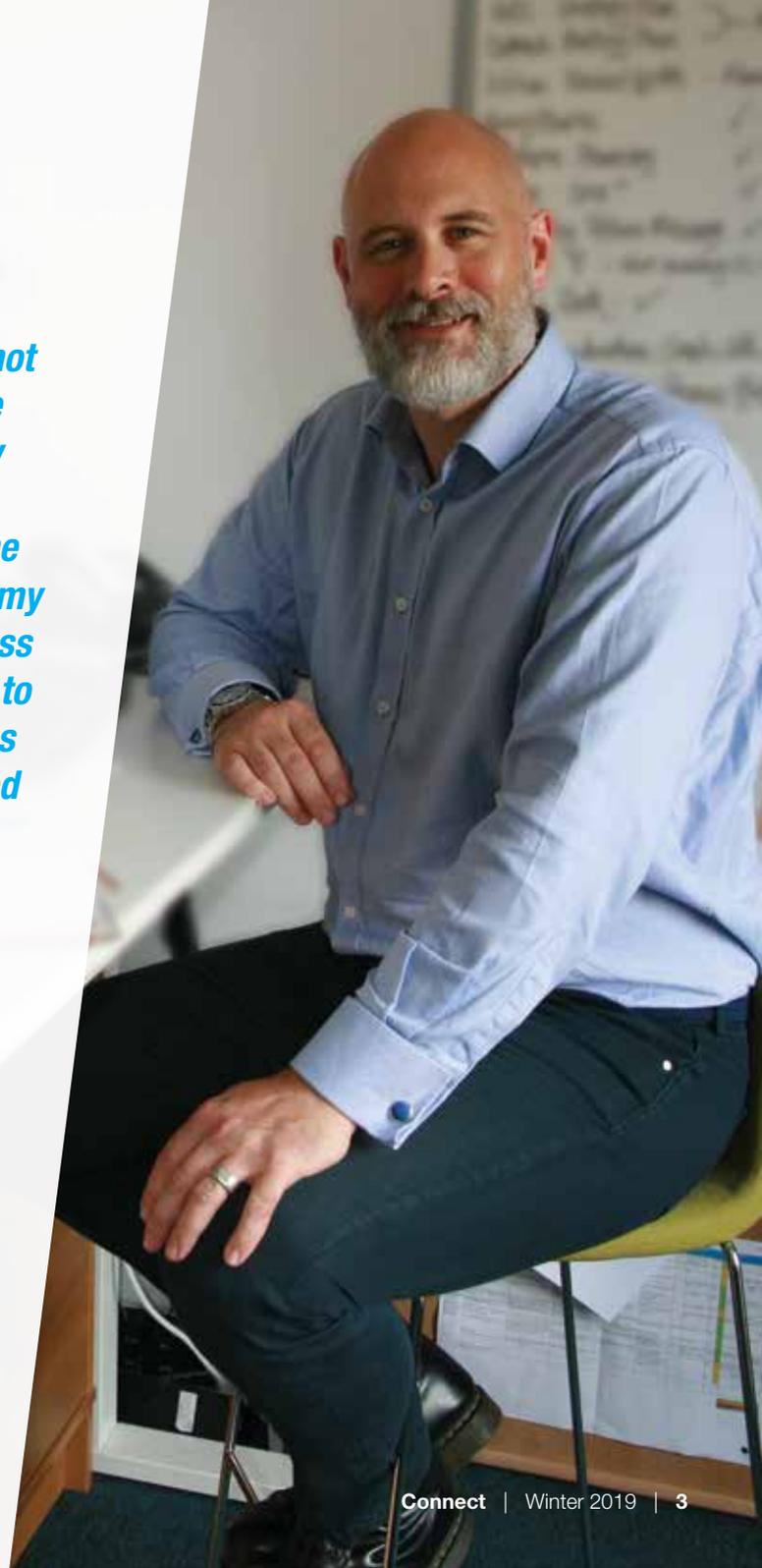
I am challenging all of us to re-focus on our respective roles as ministers of the Gospel of peace. Whether staff or volunteer, this is ministry and as such it represents the highest possible call upon our lives. This extends to our supporters without whom we can do very little to impact the brokenness of the world.

I state all of this as a way of describing the shape of my heart and the hearts of us all at Glasgow City Mission. I do not come in my own strength, at all, but in the knowledge of my own brokenness which is open to the brokenness of the world led by a God who knows all. We aim to stay focused on the ministry Jesus points us to. A ministry at the edges of the fabric of society. Where the weft and the weave becomes frayed, and where people fall between the threads. The edge of the fabric is where Jesus was, it is where He still is, and it is where we are called to be.



Charles Maasz
Chief Executive

“ I do not come in my own strength, at all, but in the knowledge of my own brokenness which is open to the brokenness of the world led by a God who knows all.”



Salt of the earth

A Bible study group that we run in partnership with Bethany Christian Trust and St George's Tron Church of Scotland is a lifeline to a group of men who have experienced the prison system.

"It's changed my life, coming here," says Martin. "I was isolated. Coming here and the fellowship has helped me grow in confidence. You hear the Gospel. It gave me confidence to go to church and I've been baptised. It all started here."

Martin is one of a group of men sitting round a table covered in empty soup bowls and plates, signs of a good lunch. They are discussing Matthew 5:13-16, "You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world."

The majority of these men have served time in prison. David, our Assistant Project Manager who helps lead the group, says, "The world, other services and prison tries to put limits on people. But these limits don't apply in here."

It's a sentiment shared by the men as they discuss what it means for them to be salt and light in the world. They agree it means doing the small things well.

"We're a radical and peculiar bunch," says Sandy, describing the group. "A Christian is a radical. I remember what I can do when I come to this table. God talks through us and we learn from each other."

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Fellowship

The group has been running for almost three years. We run it in partnership with David McAdam from Connect to Community and Rev Alastair Duncan, minister at St George's Tron Church of Scotland. It was set up to help link men who had engaged with Prison Fellowship inside prison with local churches on their release.

It's a place of community and belonging where the men can spend time with others who understand them. It's held in St George's Tron and the men can receive pastoral support from the church, as well as from David McAdam and Glasgow City Mission.

There is a strong sense of fellowship and support. Maurice says, "These guys are what is keeping me alive. I've got mental health problems. These guys listen to me. They say 'get some sleep and it will be alright in the morning'. And it is. You leave and you feel better for being here."

Stuart says, "Everyone here comes from different backgrounds. When you come

through these doors it doesn't matter if you have a big house, lots of money, or if you're in addiction or have been a criminal."

David Harper explains why this is one of his favourite times in the week. "It's proper church. There's an honesty and an intimacy and an authenticity I've rarely seen. I never leave feeling anything other than utterly blessed, every time."

Please pray for this Bible study, that these men would continue to grow closer to God and to one another as they look for ways to be salt and light in their communities. Pray that as well as attending the group they would find belonging and community in their local churches.

Please pray for a new men's group which we have started on Monday evenings. Please pray this will give men affected by addiction or who have been through the prison system more opportunities to explore faith and support one another.



Whole family

The new role of Dads Worker is enabling us to work with the whole family at our Child and Family Centre.

Our aim at the Child and Family Centre has always been to work with the whole family to bring about lasting change. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we have increasingly been able to do this in recent years. For example we have an Adult Worker, Margaret, who works with parents. We now run after school clubs for school age children and hold family holiday clubs in the holidays where parents and children spend time together.

We have been aware, however, that there was more we could be doing to engage with dads – in supporting them in their parenting role and helping them fulfil their potential. So we're delighted to be able to introduce you to James, our new Dads Worker.

James brings personal experience to the role. He says, "I'm a dad with two boys. I've been married and I've been a single dad, and I've had time where I didn't see my kids, so I know what that's like."

We are very grateful for the generosity of our supporters, which is enabling us to expand the services we offer, both at the Child and Family Centre and our City Centre project.

If you would like to make a donation to our work, please see the donation form on page 10 or phone the office on 0141 221 2630. And please be praying for James as he develops this new and vital role.

Building relationships

"Some of the men who come here can struggle at times – we want to see them empowered. We want to help the men build their confidence and untap their potential. The foundation is building relationships and trust. I hope to see changes in their lives."

James was able to start developing that trust at our summer holiday clubs. He says, "I would take the kids to the park, and the rule is that if the kids go a parent has to come too. This helped me break down barriers."

The work James does will be shaped by the needs and wishes of the dads. Plans include a men's group, a Christians Against Poverty (CAP) money course and organising trips for dads and their children. We're also building more partnerships with the local community such as Men's Sheds, so we can introduce dads to other opportunities.

Anne, our Child and Family Centre Manager, says, "Dads are part of the family unit and have an important role to play. We want to encourage them and acknowledge their contribution. I'm excited to see the work progressing now we're really working with the whole family."

Youth work

Thanks to this new role, we now have the capacity to work with a wider age range through starting a youth group for children in secondary 1 and above. It will include sports, craft and music. This will allow us to keep our relationship with the children and their parents after they leave primary school. We believe this is when some of our young people are at their most vulnerable. We already have a core group of five young people who have gone through a youth Alpha course which we have run. We want to provide a safe place for them to develop their faith and to discuss any issues they are facing in their lives.

We look forward to being able to share more about the impact of James' work in future issues of Connect.



“ The foundation is building relationships and trust. I hope to see changes in their lives.”

Sharing at the table

Guests are benefitting from building relationships of trust with staff and volunteers developed over a meal at our evening Drop-in.

In our Spring 2018 edition of Connect we told you how we were relaunching our evening Drop-in with guests, staff and volunteers serving and sharing together. This was a move away from our traditional format where staff and volunteers were so busy serving, they had limited time to sit down and chat. In our new format, we now have more opportunity to talk to our guests and build meaningful relationships. This was confirmed by one of our guests who said, "it's good to get out and have somewhere to go and chat."

Jack Geddes, our new Marketing and Fundraising Manager, was formally a volunteer at our Tuesday night Drop-in. When he got a chance to join his fellow volunteers again on a Tuesday night he was very impressed with the changes. Jack says, "I found the atmosphere very positive and welcoming. There was calmness in the room that wasn't always there before."

"Being seated at tables with menus, lamps and flowers creates an unthreatening atmosphere which is great for building relationships and understanding the concerns and aspirations of our guests. Serving a two course meal with a meat and vegetarian option helps to show how we value all who come to the Mission. One comment we received was, "I prefer the hot meals, I like to take my time to eat and I can do that here."

Eating together around the table allows conversations to flow in a natural way in a peaceful environment. It's only by getting to know people, by asking about their situations, that we can work with them to find the solutions that will make life better for them."

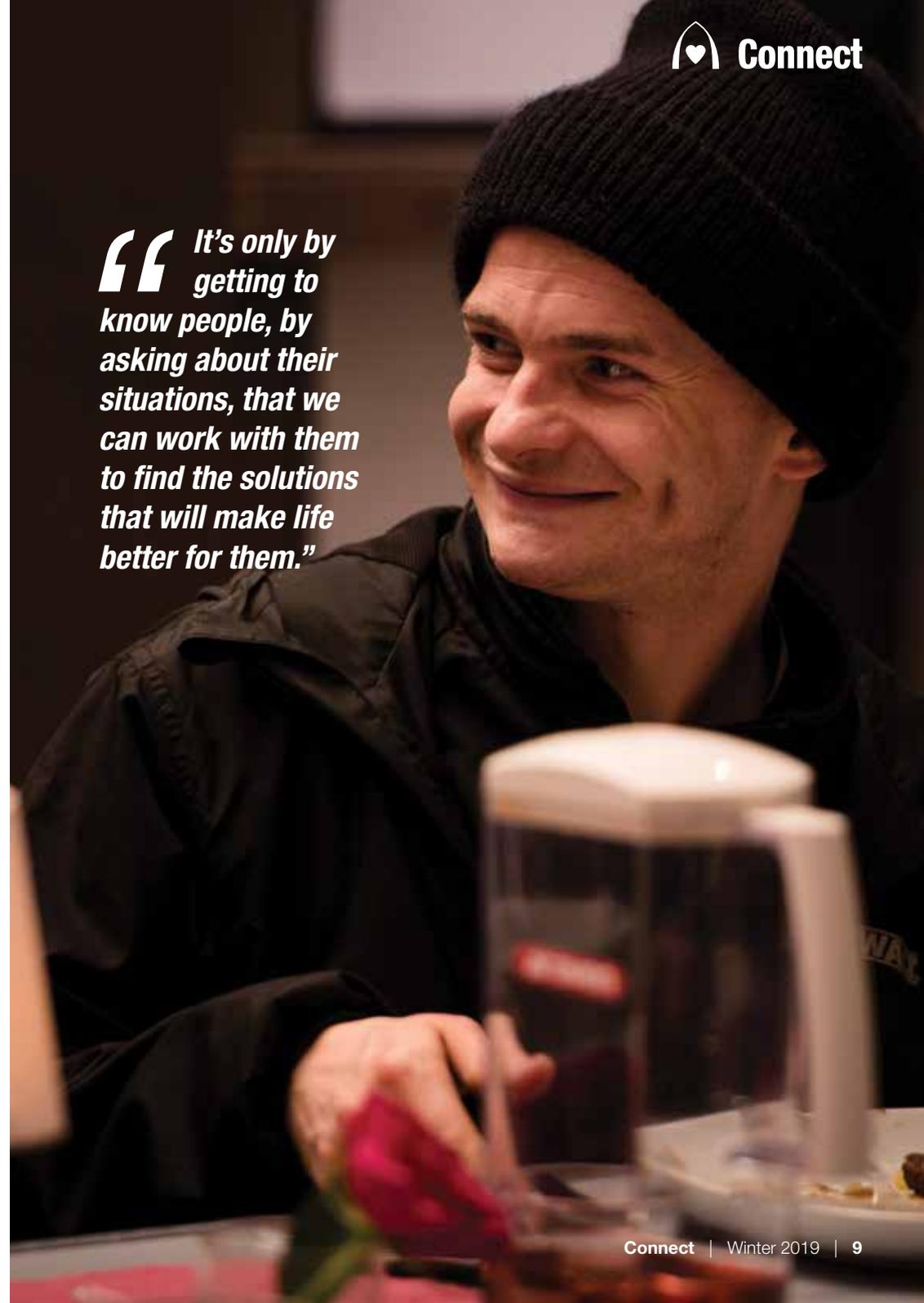
Consistency

Susan is one of our Project Workers who helps run the Monday night Drop-in. She says, "It is great seeing volunteers build relationships with guests and consistently spend time with the same guests. For example, on a Monday night one volunteer has two guests that he will sit with each week. Slowly the men are opening up about their situations and he has opportunities to offer guidance and support. This is a slow process but it is incredibly powerful."

We shouldn't be surprised that this format works. All we need to do is open the Gospels to find Jesus eating and talking with people at dinner, most famously at the Last Supper with His disciples as He prepared them for His death and resurrection. His opponents memorably said things like, "Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners." (Luke 7:34) These people didn't understand who Jesus was but many of those He ate and talked with, around the table, had their lives transformed.

Our prayer for the evening Drop-in is that our new approach to hospitality can help us to transform lives in Glasgow.

“ It's only by getting to know people, by asking about their situations, that we can work with them to find the solutions that will make life better for them.”



> New horizons



Over the summer our guests have been enjoying getting out on trips. They've been to places such as Loch Lomond and the Botanic Gardens and enjoyed activities including paddle boarding and paintballing. These outings give our guests the chance to see more of Scotland and strengthen friendships. A trip to an outdoor chess tournament in Edinburgh was significant for one of our international guests, who had recently been granted leave to remain in the UK. Visiting Edinburgh was the first time he had left Glasgow and seen more of his new home country.

> Striking a chord

Music classes at our Urban cafe are proving so popular we've tripled the number of classes we offer to three times a week. Guests sign up for lessons and arrive on time. Many of our guests have chaotic lifestyles and can find it difficult to stick to schedules, so their commitment to the music lessons is significant. One guest who has struggled with addiction says, "The music studio has been and will continue to be an immeasurable source of enjoyment and a coping mechanism during my recovery."

Pray with us

- > Pray for Charles, our Board and our Management Team as they pray and plan for our new service plan. We give thanks for our supporters, without whom none of our plans could be implemented.
- > Give thanks for the guests who are choosing to explore faith and please pray that they will grow in their understanding of God's love and forgiveness.
- > Please pray for the Glasgow Winter Night Shelter, which will open its doors once again on 1 December for four months. Pray that all the planning and training goes smoothly and that once again, working in partnership, we will be able to get night shelter guests into suitable accommodation.
- > Give thanks that we now have James in the role of Dads Worker. Please pray for this new work, that we will be able to build good relationships with the dads.

More online

Keep up to date with our latest news, events and prayer requests.

Follow us on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter for up to the minute news of how your support is changing lives.

Visit our website:
www.glasgowcitymission.com



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): _____

2 Title: _____ First name: _____ Surname: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Tel: _____

Where did you receive this copy of Connect: _____

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

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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:

- volunteering
- fundraising
- leaving a gift in my will
- booking someone to speak at my church/group
- arranging a visit to Glasgow City Mission
- I want to receive prayer news by email

Email: _____

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

First Friday Tours

Come and see first-hand the impact which your support is having at our city centre project.

Guided tour of our five-storey building with refreshments.

The first Friday of every month.

Book online at:
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> events
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