

How your support is transforming lives.



# Together again

### **Summer fun**

This summer's Family Holiday Club felt more special than ever – bringing families together after lockdown.

### **Stress release**

Park activities provide people seeking asylum with much needed opportunities to leave their hotel rooms.

### **News and prayer**

Our latest news about current services and the impact they're having.

# Being sent out

Ever considered how the apostles and disciples of Jesus would have coped with lockdown? Well, in a way I think we know the answer. After ascension, the early church gathered in Jerusalem, persecuted and fearful. From here though they were sent out by the Spirit to the rest of the world. One of the apostles, Philip, was always ahead of the rest – he went wherever he was called (or taken!), no matter the ethnic or cultural boundaries. The move from being gathered to sending has a strong Biblical precedent.

Interestingly, long before we were talking of Covid-19, Glasgow City Mission staff teams were consulted on features of our future mission. Many stated they foresaw work which took us out of our buildings and into wider areas of the city.

Lockdown has had a profound effect. Our Glasgow Winter Night Shelter (from this point forward referred to as Overnight Welcome Centre) is awaiting confirmation of a new venue, the Child and Family Centre has adapted to using the nearby park for more activities and the city centre team have been creatively exploring new ways of doing ministry away from the building on Crimea Street. This issue of Connect highlights some of this.

In the coming months we may find ourselves using our buildings in different ways as we explore new opportunities. We could do much worse than to follow Phillip's example in the coming days.



**Charles Maasz**  
Chief Executive

# Summer fun

**This summer's Family Holiday Club felt more special than ever. After months of isolated lockdown, families were relieved to get out and meet up again for socially distanced fun in the park.**

We ran the club for the first four weeks of the summer holidays, with socially distanced games, crafts and picnics. Over the course of the four weeks, we saw more than 170 children and 89 adults.

Angela first came to the Child and Family Centre on a student placement more than 15 years ago. She is now employed as the Cleaner at the Centre and her two daughters, Willow, 5 and Katie, 10, have grown up through the Centre, from parent and toddlers to our after school clubs. She says, "It's made us interact more and do things together which has helped the kids, especially in these circumstances [lockdown]."

They enjoyed taking part in the Holiday Club as a family. Angela says, "The kids were outside with me but had freedom because there were other adults there to keep them safe. Katie was able to spend time with her friends. We had dancing, quizzes, a talent show, drawing with chalk, hula hoops and frisbees.

"They would have been miserable and lonely without the holiday club, There's nothing else round here. It has definitely been a benefit – to be outside seeing friends and other adults after being in the house so long with just me and their dad. It has helped them with going back to school as well."



Lockdown has exacerbated the money worries facing some of our families, due to job losses and hours being cut. All of our activities are free and we provided snacks and lunch each day. This meant families could enjoy the club and know their children were having a good time without thinking about the cost. We gave out activity packs to the children so they could continue playing when they got home.

## New term

Our Nursery started back on 13 August. Anne Scott, Centre Manager, says, "The children are happy to be back. It's lovely to hear their laughter and have life about the centre again. Parents have been very supportive in helping us keep everyone safe and well."

At the time of writing, government guidelines mean we cannot yet open our building for any of our other services. We will be reintroducing other activities slowly and in line with guidance, with as many activities as possible – such as keep fit and our men's group – taking place outdoors.

**“ It has definitely been a benefit – to be outside seeing friends and other adults after being in the house so long.**



# Stress release

**Activities we're running in a local park are providing people seeking asylum with a much-needed chance to leave their hotel rooms.**

Hassan signed up for our Glasgow Green project as soon as he saw our notice in the hotel where he has been staying since March. The mental health impact of housing asylum seekers in hotels during lockdown has been well documented. Hassan says of Glasgow City Mission, "They came for us in very difficult days. Staying in one room is hard and we couldn't be in the lobby of the hotel at that time. If it wasn't for these activities we would stay in our rooms and remember our families and our lives. The stress has been a little bit decreased."

Helen, one of our international Project Workers, says, "The thought of living in a hotel may sound luxurious. However, the reality of staring at the same four walls all day, without the ability to make decisions about the food you eat or to top up your phone to stay in touch with family and friends, is a very different reality. Our goal is to invite folk out of their hotel rooms and provide opportunities for community and connection and help people get to know their new city."

Today, Hassan has enjoyed a walk while other guests have been doing a fitness workout. He has also been able to visit our building, which is open again during the day for those who need one-to-one advocacy support.

## Community and hope

Despite the hardships he has faced at home in Sudan and now in Glasgow during lockdown, he remains hopeful. He says, "People (at Glasgow City Mission) give you power and hope, because you are not alone. These difficult days will be past and we can start a new life. We came from hard days – watching wars and killings.

"I am looking forward to studying and bringing my family (who are still in Sudan) here. It's a long process but you still have the hope. Living without family is hard – our heart and soul is still there. Covid is bad in Sudan. People get paid daily so they need to go out to work for food for their families."

People are being left in limbo in hotels during lockdown. In August, Mears, the company who have the contract to house people seeking asylum, reportedly said people could be in the hotels until 2021, due to a lack of suitable flats to move people into. Those staying in the hotels have very limited options and no money to buy their own food or to use public transport.

## Being heard

Abdul, originally from Yemen, arrived in Glasgow just as lockdown was starting. He has not yet had his substantive interview, which will help determine if he is eligible to seek asylum, and has been staying in a hotel since March. He says, "It's stressful to sit in the (hotel) room but the staff of the hotel are good and have recruited an Arabian chef. We have to be patient – it's better than our home.

"Helen and Adam (Project Workers) give us a lot of information about Glasgow and fun times, and we can meet local people. We find people to hear us at Glasgow City Mission. It's the first time it's happened to me – it reduces the stress and they do their best if we need something."

This project is evolving to meet the needs of those attending. We hope to offer small English classes and more in the way of physical activities. As winter approaches, we're looking for indoor venues that will allow us to continue to meet whilst socially distancing.

**“ People (at Glasgow City Mission) give you power and hope, because you are not alone. These difficult days will be past and we can start a new life.**



## Please pray

Pray for the asylum seekers and refugees who have complex mental health needs rooted in extreme trauma. They are also living with uncertainty around their immigration status, which can exacerbate mental health needs. Pray too for the mental health services that are working with them but which have extensive waiting lists.

## News round-up

### > Reconnecting



As well as activities for asylum seekers staying in hotels, we're also running outdoor activities for other guests. Simon, Project Worker, says, "We have been supporting people over the phone – but it makes a huge difference to see faces and have fun in small groups. We chat and laugh over coffee and play games. We may start to introduce other activities but for now, people are just keen to catch up. It's been a long time since we've seen each other! Lots of guests have said that we are the first group they have seen in ages."

### > Advocacy

Our building is open through the week for those needing someone to talk to or advocacy support. We've been helping, for example, guests to phone the Council's homelessness casework team if they don't have a phone, or if they don't have the confidence to phone by themselves. We are seeing up to 20 people a day.

### > Overnight Welcome Centre

The Overnight Welcome Centre replaces the night shelter, and we hope to open on 1 November, a month earlier than usual in response to severe weather last November. It will have a new look in order to keep guests safe during the pandemic. We will be working hard with our partners to enable guests to move into suitable and long-term accommodation.

### Pray with us

- > Give thanks that our Family Holiday Club went well and that relationships were built and deepened. Please pray for safety for our Nursery and the other activities we're now able to run.
- > Please pray for the one to one work we're doing. Pray we will be able to get to the roots of the issues our guests are facing and will be able to help them find solutions.
- > Pray for the all the people attending our activities on Glasgow Green. Pray for wisdom as we plan ahead into winter when activities will need to move indoors. Pray too for the safety of all who take part and that we will continue to build community with our guests.
- > As we finalise arrangements for the Overnight Welcome Centre, please pray for the team as they start their training and pray all of the logistics come together. Pray too for all those who will stay at the Centre this year.

### More online

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

[www.glasgowcitymission.com](http://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): \_\_\_\_\_

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

2 Title: \_\_\_\_\_ First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

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:

- 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

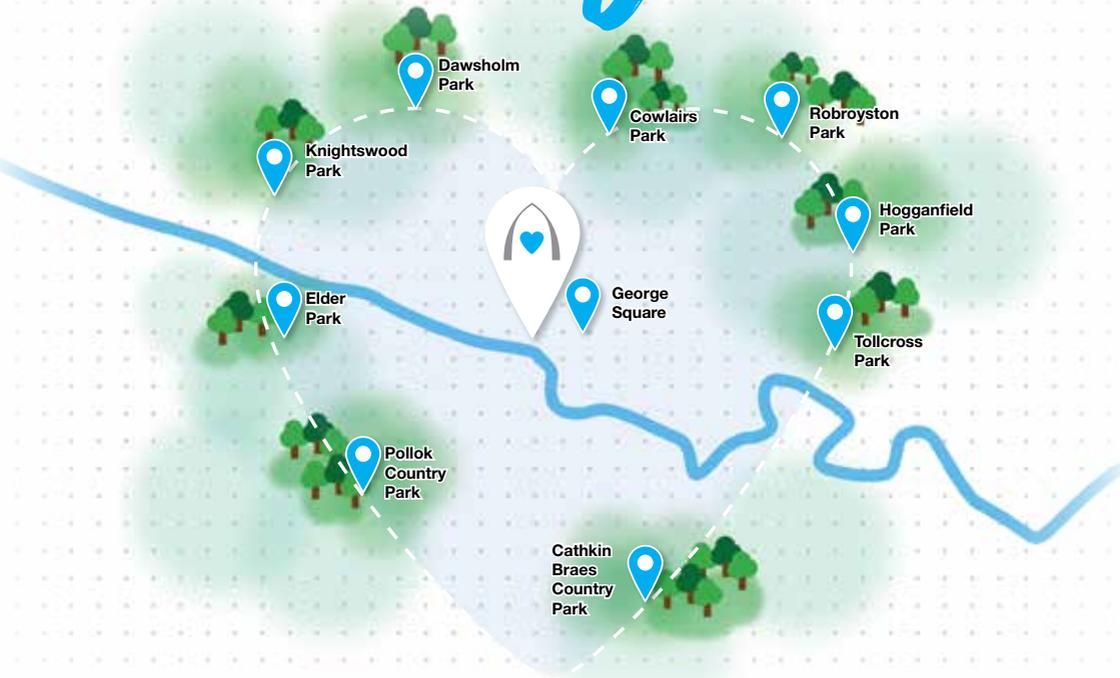
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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WIN20

# Heart for Glasgow



Fundraiser! Sunday 4 October. Walk or run to make a difference in the lives of people affected by homelessness and poverty. Sign-up for a section of our 32-mile, heart-shaped route or a 5k park run.

More details on our website at  
[www.glasgowcitymission.com](http://www.glasgowcitymission.com) > news and events > events.

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