



CATHCART YOUTH MINISTRY PARTNERSHIP

September 2020

Dear Friends,

I hope you are all keeping well, and have been finding opportunities to gain some rest and enjoy some sunshine over these summer months.

I want to let you know a bit about our activities over these past months, through all the challenges. In my previous letter, in April, I mentioned that Cara and Murdo had very quickly moved to an online programme...with the now well-known *Zoom* platform.

As you can imagine, this has continued, and, for now, is still the way in which CYMP activities are being run.

Over the summer, we have continued with Fusion (Sunday morning), Illuminate/Kaio (Discipleship group – Tuesday evenings), Murdo's Quiz (Thursday evenings), and Meet & Eat (Fridays). This pattern has continued now that school has returned. We are very grateful to Cara, Murdo and Philip for energy and commitment to these weekly interactions with the young people and their families over the summer. We have been really delighted with the sustained engagement with this programme, and are looking ahead with anticipation of more encouraging times. We will be ready to adapt as the government introduces changes to the restrictions at the appropriate times – and we very much look forward to being able to meet face to face again, even if the timing of this is still unknown!

Our first 'Online Holiday Club' took place over the 5 weeks in July. This involved families being able to collect weekly 'goody bags' from Cara, Murdo and Gail



McLay each Monday outside the Gateway, and then the P1-7s were able to join for an hour long 'Zoom Holiday Club' each Friday afternoon. I think we all approached this Holiday Club season with some anxiety as this was a

bit of an unknown, and of course, there were still feelings of loss of what should have been – 'normal' Holiday Club is such a vibrant, encouraging time in the summer holidays, which is full of smiles and laughter! However, we have very much appreciated prayers for

this online venture – and have found it to be a very positive experience, with many families engaging enthusiastically each week. With leaders and *Minions* (young leaders) on the *Zoom* call too, it was a very special time each week with the sharing of how various crafts / recipes / experiments (from the goody bags) had gone over the week; some songs; Bible story; and a wee video from our very own 'Dr Hubble' (whose episodes were a delight each week!!). We also managed group time, in the form of 'Breakout Groups', which worked well.

Some children were clearly more relaxed and chatty with *Zoom* than others who were quieter...maybe

reflecting us all when it comes to *Zoom* calls! As the weeks progressed, it was great to see how the children became more at



home with all that was going on, and more willing to ask questions too. It was also clear that new opportunities were developing as we realised that we very much had the privilege of being 'in' people's homes, and other family members were listening to what was going on...how amazing! That certainly was an unexpected opportunity which we had not considered before online Holiday Club began! There were around 35 families (a good mix of church families, known community contacts and new friends) who registered and collected the 50 goody bags (or had them delivered) each week, and around 35 young people who managed to join in on the Fridays. The times spent while families collected the bags in person were hugely valuable each week in continuing to



maintain links with our community, many of whom are not involved in the local churches. We were really amazed,

and very thankful, to hear the positive comments about online Holiday Club throughout July and we can look back to see new opportunities develop.



Over the summer, we also held Online Youth Café. This went well too, with games, chat and 'God Spot'. We were really encouraged with the number of young people



committing to coming along each week – and again, this provided valuable time for both Cara and Murdo to keep up good links with the young people.

Another (very big!) surprise for the summer was the opportunity to partner with Clyde Scouts. We were approached by Gary Bainbridge (Cathcart Trinity Church), who is a lead within Clyde Scouts, to see whether we would be interested in a joint approach to provide an online summer programme for children and young people



involved in scouts across Glasgow & Clyde. This new venture, '[Clyde Connected](#)' was successful in securing funds (from the Scottish Government's Wellbeing Fund) and Cara and Murdo were able to contribute to the programme for the scouts. (Some of our own young people joined up with Clyde Connected too, which was an added bonus!). We were very grateful to Gary for such an inspired and creative idea. This also helped towards easing the financial situation over the summer, with a contribution made to CYMP from the Wellbeing Fund, as a result of the CYMP staff input. A lasting legacy from this has been that Cara was asked

to make up a further 100 Sensory Boxes (boxes to help young people of all ages, to concentrate during activity times) to be given to each Scouting unit as they head towards meeting up again. 100 Sensory Boxes had originally been made up at the start of July, and delivered to families who



had requested this to help scouts over the summer. Also, CYMP received some computer tablets, to be given to young people in the area who may have need in order to engage with online programmes at any stage. We are so grateful for the Clyde Connected programme, which we were able to be part of, and delighted that this partnership has played a part in helping over 400 young people in the wider area to

structure their summer, and to provide some positive experiences in amongst all that has been going on.

Cara also led a Letter Writing group over May and June, and letters have been sent out to many within our congregations, as well as some in the local community too. Hopefully, these letters brightened people's days...and I know that the young people enjoyed being able to participate and help others in this practical way too!

July saw the end of Philip's internship with the [Baptist Union](#). Although he clearly did not have opportunity to enjoy all the events and activities that had been planned due to the pandemic, he finished well and his contributions to the work of CYMP have been very much appreciated – and it was great that he was able to participate on many of the Zoom events too. Thank you, Philip...and we are very much hoping that we will still benefit from having you as part of the CYMP volunteer team!



Prayers would be appreciated, for wisdom as we look to how and when to start face to face youth work again, and for creativity as we look to the needs of the young people around us. We hope to reach out to young people not already known to us – this seems a particular challenge just now with the current restrictions, and not knowing what lies ahead. We are keen to start the Vibe Project sessions again, but need wisdom for the best way forward for this too. We pray that paths will open up for us and that we will have opportunities to help bring the light of God's love into the lives of children and young people in the area. Pray too for the young people as they adapt to changes within school, and for those who have left school recently – that good opportunities lie ahead, and that they continue on their faith journeys and engage with our churches too.

Thank you again for ongoing support, care and interest – it is so much appreciated – especially in this year of 'Yay and Adventure!' (The adventure has certainly been an unexpected one!)

*Karen Gurling
CYMP Chair*

