

September 2020

Dear Friends...

From the GROW Management Team

Dear Friends,

It seems such a long time ago since I wrote for a newsletter – almost like another world as so much has happened since last February! I hope that you are well and have been able to enjoy some of the benefits of this strange period even if that has been an appreciation for what went before!

If you haven't read the blogs that have continued to provide updates on our websites there's a wee bit to catch up on. It will probably come as no surprise to learn that, given that most of Oskar's work is based in schools, the trustees and management group decided to place Oskar on furlough from 1st April. We have continued to support 100% of his salary throughout that time, monitoring the situation each month at management meetings and have been blessed with the continued support administratively of SU. Just prior to lockdown Oskar had given us advance notice of his intention to leave his position with GROW at the end of July. He is moving to Inverness to be the youth worker for Culduthel Christian Centre. Obviously the situation has been complicated by matters outside our control but we have worked with the leadership at CCC and Oskar will return to complete his time with us at the end of August and then begin his new role in September.

As a trust we would like to thank Oskar for all the gifts and enthusiasm he has brought to the work, for the way he has engaged with chaplaincy teams providing assemblies in high schools and encouraged the interaction of the generations in school through Gener8. Though this has not been the way that Oskar or the trust would have chosen to complete his time with us, we recognise that as church communities begin to open up again and youth work recommences, now is an ideal and an exciting time to be starting his new role. We wish him every blessing in his new career and assure him of our continued prayers and interest.



Being aware of Oskar's intention, the trustees and management group decided to hold a strategy morning, via Zoom, on 22nd August with our church leaders or their representatives, to begin the process of developing a way forward, reviewing the vision and nature of the work in the light of current circumstances together. This process will continue in the coming weeks. Part of that process is the decision to hold our delayed AGM via Zoom on **Thursday 17th September at 7.00pm**. We had hoped that it would be possible to meet in person but at the moment that's not permitted and with no potential date imminent, we have decided to go ahead. A separate invite with the Zoom details will be issued with this newsletter.

If you are able, we would love to see as many as possible "on screen!" We will be not only paying tribute to Oskar but to Alf Patey who is retiring as a trustee. Alf has been a trustee since GROW was formed in October 2003 and his insight, comments and suggestions have been so valuable over the years. We wish Mary and Alf, who have recently married, every blessing together and still hope to see them at future GROW events – when that becomes possible!

As we move forward as a trust, but also at the moment as individuals, church communities and as a nation, I'm reminded of Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." Though much of what the future holds is unknown we can have confidence that our God will be with us every step of the way.

Take care, Chris



Hello...

Oskar Forbes – GROW Outreach Worker



Hello...

and, for now, goodbye. As I write, I am preparing to finish my time with GROW and move to a new job, as a youth worker for a church in Inverness. After four years in post, this would have felt a little strange at the best of times, but it feels even more so after five months of furlough in the current pandemic world, in which we now live. The past four years have brought me many different and exciting opportunities and I am very thankful to you all for your prayers and support along the way. It's hard to know exactly what to say, as I move on, particularly as I move on in such unusual times and my contact with everyone for the last few months has been very limited, but as I look back over my time with GROW, the one thing I feel, above everything else is gratitude.

I am thankful for the many opportunities God has given us, over the last few years to work with the children and young people of Glenrothes, in schools and beyond. It isn't possible to list everything we have done over the last few years but the very varied work we have been involved in has included running assemblies and speaking in RME classes, helping to support pupils with additional support needs, running SU groups and drop-ins, giving out a few thousand cups of tea, coffee and hot chocolate, the Gener8 course, helping to support annual school trips to the Edinburgh Science Fair, running *It's Your Move* for Primary 7 pupils, helping to run residential weekends, setting up acoustic nights, movie nights, and supporting local church groups and holiday clubs to name just a few. I have always been encouraged by the doors God has opened up to us over these last four years and I pray, with confidence, that he will continue to open these doors, and more in the years to come.

I am also very thankful for the people I have met over the last few years that I have had the privilege to work alongside, as we strive to share the Gospel creatively with the young people of the town. There are far too many to name here individually, but I am so thankful for the many different youth workers, ministers and volunteers I have worked with in my time in Glenrothes.

Their friendship, support and encouragement have meant so much to me, and I am confident that God will continue to use them as they share the Gospel with others.

In a recent interview with Glenrothes Baptist Church, Jan said that GROW is all about relationships, and it has been my privilege, over these last four years to experience that fully. In the last few years, by the continued involvement of youth workers and volunteers in the projects of GROW, it has been so exciting to see relationships strengthen between different youth ministries in the town, to see Chaplaincy teams grow, supporting and inspiring each other and the schools they serve and to see children and young people grow in their relationship and knowledge of God. It has also been exciting to see the generation gap disappear between younger and older people as they played games together and talked in Gener8, and to see, through new and creative ways, how we can continue to develop the relationship between those of you who support us and the work that we do.

As I finish my time with you all, far from the way I would have imagined it, let me say thank you. Thank you for your support, your prayers, and encouragement, both for the work we have been doing and for me personally, and thank you for your involvement in our work. Whether it be by financial giving, prayer or by giving your time and working with us directly in the schools, the work of GROW continues to be a collective effort and as I leave please be assured of my continued prayer and support for you all. I can't wait to see where God takes you next.

Let me leave you with Paul's words of encouragement from Ephesians 3:20-21

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen."

GROW AGM

Thursday 17 September: 7:00PM on Zoom

If you would like to be notified on a monthly basis of GROW items for prayer please contact us by phone on 07598804183 or by email at youthworker@grow-trust.co.uk