

Building for the Future

Vision for a Children and Families Worker at St Columba's

Don't forget the things your eyes have seen. As long as you live, don't let them slip from your mind. Teach them to your children and their children after them.

Deuteronomy 4:9

VISION

We would like to share with you what we believe is an exciting vision to build for the future here at St Columba's by appointing a Children and Families Worker.

Belonging to the church here at St Columba's means a great deal to many of us: we appreciate the fellowship we have with one another, and for some never more so than over these past months of the COVID pandemic; we are grateful for all the ways God has blessed us as a church. However, many of us may also be concerned that the number of children and families in our church is low. We long to see this increase. Children are the seed corn of the church of the future, and we recognise the real and urgent need to attract more children and families into the fellowship.

With this in mind, the Kirk Session asked a small team of elders (Anne Inglis, Jackie Ringan and Ramsay Vallance), along with the minister, to explore the possibility of employing a Children and Families Worker here at St Columba's. After prayerful consideration and seeking expert advice, this small team recommended to Session that appointing a full-time Children and Families Worker, over a period of three years in the first instance and with a view to starting in Autumn 2022, could greatly benefit our church fellowship and indeed our wider community including local schools. Session was pleased to accept this recommendation.

REMIT

The broad remit of a Children and Families Worker would be to assist with ministry and mission to children and families. Specific areas of work would depend on the experience and skills of the successful candidate – as well as the opportunities to use these. However, we would expect the areas of work to include some of the following:

- Leadership of children's ministry on a Sunday morning
- Developing relationships with children and families made through some of the existing midweek activities of the church
- Identifying and grasping opportunities within the local community for mission to children and families
- Making use of holiday periods to organise activities for children and families
- Assisting with school chaplaincy work

FUNDING

Financing a three-year appointment of a full-time Children and Families Worker is challenging but not impossible. It is likely to cost around £90,000 allowing for salary and necessary expenses including Income Tax and National Insurance. A salary of £22,000-£24,000 per annum is under consideration.

We believe that funding this project could be achieved from three sources:

- 1) 30% of the total (£27,000) from existing church funds. The Kirk Session has recommended this to the Congregational Board and the Congregational Board has agreed with this recommendation.
- 2) 35% of the total (£31,500) from specific giving for this project from individual church members/regular attenders.
- 3) 35% of the total (£31,500) from one or more successful grant applications (we have identified 6 grant awarding trusts to apply to). We believe that grant applications are more likely to be successful if a significant part of the funding has already been raised.

SUPPORT

In the first place, please do pray for the outworking of this vision for a Children and Families worker here at St Columba's, that God would be pleased to bless this appointment for the good of his church and indeed the wider community.

Secondly, we would be most grateful if you would give prayerful consideration to supporting the project financially. St Columba's has an enviable reputation for generous giving and we firmly believe that this project could represent a huge investment in the future of St Columba's, more than 50 years after its birth.

Donations may be made as a monthly standing order or as one or more lump sums given specifically to this project. If you wish to give by standing order, please complete the attached standing order form and return it to the church office or put it in a marked envelope in the offering plate on a Sunday morning. We would then forward the completed standing order form to the appropriate bank. Alternatively, if you wish to give a lump sum donation, please hand this to the church office (between 9 and 12, Mon and Thurs) or put it in the offering plate on a Sunday morning.

Gift Aid will be sought if appropriate for specific donations for the project from members of the congregation. Should you wish to support the project financially, but you do not already give by Gift Aid to the church, we would encourage you to consider doing so to enable your gift to go further. Please speak with our Church Treasurer, Neil Bathie, for more information about this or indeed any other questions relating to financial support of the project.

Whilst we would be hugely grateful for financial support for the project at any time, any gifts given or pledged by standing order by 28 February 2022 would be especially helpful. We hope to start applying for additional grant funding from March 2022 and the more we can say we have raised locally by that point, the greater the likelihood of these grant applications being successful.

QUESTIONS

We do appreciate you may have questions about the vision we have shared for a Children and Families Worker. We would be very happy to meet up or schedule a phone call to try and answer them. Please do get in touch with any member of the team to arrange that.

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On behalf of the Kirk Session of St Columba's Parish Church