

Dear Friends,

During July I visited the Lodging House Mission to thank the staff and volunteers there on behalf of Presbytery. The LHM is our longest standing Presbytery of Glasgow project and provides invaluable support to some of the most vulnerable of our fellow citizens of Glasgow.

The LHM has been through a difficult time over the last 18 months. In addition to the pandemic they have also had to cope with both the tragic death earlier this year of their Manager Stephen Mitchell and with Deacon Claire Herbert suffering a rare adverse reaction to her second Covid vaccination. We all wish Claire a speedy return to full fitness. Of the staff at the LHM, who are Helen, Angela, Claire, Mark, Archie, Mark, Chris and June; Chris and Helen have also had Covid.

This Presbytery and the city of Glasgow owe all the staff and volunteers at the LHM an enormous debt of gratitude. Although they don't shout about it, what they do is not routine. They all intervene in the lives of visitors to the LHM for the better and give people a chance to live a fuller life. Whether it's providing a meal or showers, or a course of instruction or education or just keeping someone away from their addictions for a few hours.

The streets of Glasgow can at times feel unsafe and unfriendly, but at the LHM the law of the streets is left out there and I have no doubt that the Love of God starts immediately within its doors. What is done by the staff and volunteers of the LHM is beyond price. I couldn't do it and I doubt if many of us presbyters could. But rest assured, what is being done by the LHM is God's work and is the very embodiment of our Lord's assurance in Matthew 25 that whatever is done for their visitors, the least of those amongst the citizens of Glasgow, is being done for Him.

I have no doubt that if we were to take a poll of those who attend our churches, what is done at 36 East Campbell Street would be seen as amongst the most important work which we, as a Church and Presbytery could ever support. Even with a necessarily restricted service, during the week I was there, the LHM still provided 243 meals for their visitors.

Earlier this summer June Macleod joined the staff of the LHM as Day Centre Manager. She brings with her a wealth of experience and, as all new folk do, some new ideas. These include revising the menu, although visitors may rest assured that breakfast rolls on sausage and fried egg will still be available.

A typical LHM menu now includes a hearty, freshly made lentil soup followed by a baked potato with various toppings, homemade coleslaw and side salad. The folk using the LHM have been very receptive to the menu change and the hope is that they will enjoy some fabulous new flavours and feel the benefit health-wise too.

From the beginning of this month the LHM has also been re-establishing its other activities, including its education and other regular programmes.

As the days get shorter and harvest time gets underway, our various Harvest thanksgivings are not far off. This is traditionally a time of year when we in the Presbytery of Glasgow think more deeply about the work of the LHM, with many congregations generously providing tangible support with contributions of foodstuffs and money. This year, with the introduction of the new menu, they would also love to receive donations of fresh produce alongside the usual dried and canned goods.

Given the difficulties which the LHM has overcome in this last 18 months in order to keep its vital services functioning, it would be greatly appreciated if those congregations who regularly support their work could consider increasing that support this year. If your own congregation has never previously supported the work of the LHM then 2021 would be a very good year to start.

In an effort to reduce food waste and see it being put to better use than land fill, the LHM would also like to find a farm or smallholding that might like to take their vegetable peel and non-meat waste for animal feed. If anyone knows of somewhere that fits the bill, please do get in touch with **June Macleod at the LHM on 0141-552 0285**.

As you will have gathered, I am unashamedly a supporter of the work of God being done, every day - not just at Harvest-time - by the Lodging House Mission. As one of our Presbytery of Glasgow Projects, it relies on each and every congregation in the Presbytery to support its work with donations of food, money and of course, we also always want to remember that work in our prayers.

Thanks for taking the time to read this message. It could be *the* few minutes which changes someone's life for the better through the vital work of the LHM.

May God bless you all,

Robert

Robert G Hynd

Moderator,

The Presbytery of Glasgow