



Parish Profile

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Whiteinch Church of Scotland, Scottish Charity No SC030362

COVID-19 SITUATION

This parish profile is a reflection on much of our church life before March 2020. We have moved our groups and Sunday services online to allow our congregation and beyond to continue to worship God and connect with each other. We do not have our own building and usually hire space in the Whiteinch Centre, the local community centre, every week. Current government restrictions prevent us from gathering in person as the Whiteinch Centre remains closed. We are learning that we are the church wherever we are!

INTRODUCTION

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.” Luke 10:27

We are an evangelical, charismatic church with a strong desire to pursue intimacy with God. Out of that place we seek to follow the Great Commission given by Jesus to reach out and disciple others - from our local communities and workplaces to the wider world. In all we do we aim to balance connecting UP to God, IN to the church and OUT to the world.

The core beliefs of the church are centred around the fivefold ministry of Ephesians 4, and ongoing discipleship that encourages and releases people into using their God-given gifts. As a church and as individuals we have a heart to serve our community, playing an active role in seeking to address issues around poverty relief and supporting those in addiction recovery.



Our congregation is about 80 strong and meets on Sunday, along with various other weekly and monthly activities. Some people travel in to Whiteinch to be part of the church, others have moved to be part of the Christian witness in Whiteinch. Others have lived in Whiteinch first then come to faith and joined the church. Regardless of our background, we’ve found our home here and we hope that others will find Jesus and become part of our church family.

HISTORY OF THE CONGREGATION

Our Origin

In 1996 Scotstoun and Whiteinch Parish Church set aside Alan McWilliam (the associate minister) and a group of elders for the task of re-establishing a worshipping community in the Whiteinch area of the parish. They formed Whiteinch Fellowship which then became Whiteinch Church of Scotland, a parish with full status, in 2000. Having met for Sunday worship in various buildings in the community, we have continued to meet in the Whiteinch Centre since its completion in 2006.

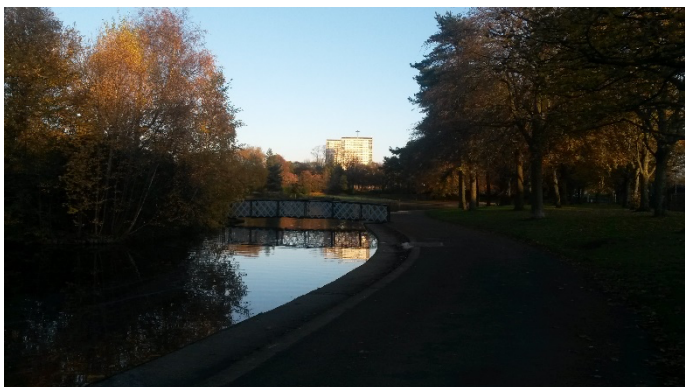
Alan remained the minister until September 2019, when he formally demitted. Because of the breadth of Alan’s ministry, Whiteinch Church has been blessed over the years with leadership from the various teams of elders as well as through the post of Congregational Leader. We give thanks for Alan and for all those who have led the congregation over the years.

After Alan left, we took time as a church to reflect and consider who we are. We are now excited about the possibility of having a new senior leader join us on our journey. We are a church who value and expect to see spiritual gifts demonstrated and we are looking for a minister who will encourage us to expect God to show up amongst us. We are praying for a woman or man who can both lead and be part of a team – someone who knows who they are and who gets who we are! Someone who can lead us forward – mindful of the past but always looking ahead, with a heart for the congregation but also for the community and beyond. Most importantly we are looking for someone who is a God-appointment.

COMMUNITY PROFILE – OUR LOCAL CONTEXT

Whiteinch is an urban parish in the North West of Glasgow numbering just over 5000 people and containing a wide mix of housing as well as an industrial area on the banks of the River Clyde to the South. Dumbarton Road is the main thoroughfare running through the middle of the parish with Victoria Park situated to the North. The community centre (where we meet on Sundays) is surrounded by areas of multiple deprivation. There are good transport links and a range of local shops. Whiteinch has 3 nurseries and 2 primary schools, one denominational and one non-denominational which the Church of Scotland has been involved with through chaplaincy and supporting Scripture Union (SU) activity. There are a number of GP surgeries and local businesses meeting the needs of the community. For more details please see:

<https://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/documents/statistics/deprivation/161041.pdf>



SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

The weekly Sunday morning service is held at 10:30 in the Whiteinch Community Centre. Its format although following a structure, is relaxed and informal in style. During the pandemic we have had a shorter and simpler worship service on YouTube followed by post-church coffee on Zoom.

The church Leadership Team (consisting of five elders) decides the topic, subject, or passages to be preached on the following weeks. Members of the leadership team would generally lead the service with members of the congregation contributing, including children and young people. Lots of people serve behind the scenes with set-up and sound/AV support, welcome team duties, etc. Everybody plays their part.

We have a variety of talented musicians and song writers who lead our sung worship with mainly, but not exclusively, modern songs. These include choices from Bethel music, Hillsong and traditional hymns. Sung worship continues for 30-40 minutes, with folks encouraged to express their worship and praise to God through art, dance, flags and banners. We see this as an important part of our service and ministry to God.

Holy Communion is normally celebrated monthly. Children are often involved and encouraged to participate. There have been approximately ten baptisms in the last five years.

Usually the children stay in for sung worship then go to their various groups but every few weeks the young people are encouraged to remain with the rest of congregation when we have a café-style all age service. We sit around circular tables and have a variety of activities and discussion.



Throughout the history of our church there have been different/special services. In recent years these have included two joint gatherings, one with a Ghanaian church in Ruchazie and the other with Partick South church. Two weddings have been celebrated as part of our morning service. We have often been blessed by a variety of guest speakers who have been invited to take part in our worship.



Our Sunday Morning service includes a prayer slot, which has had a variety of topics as its focus. Each week we are led to pray for something from either the local area, Glasgow, Scotland or the world. Sometimes this takes place as a whole church, other times in small groups. We also have a dedicated ministry team who offer prayer to those who desire it at the end of the service. Before the service, there is a prayer meeting at 9.45 upstairs in the centre. There is a printed notice sheet which is distributed at the door as people arrive. Many members, however, receive this by email.

PRAYER, WORSHIP AND CREATIVITY

“Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise.” James 5:13

We seek to live out of deep intimacy with God where a lifestyle of prayer and worship is the foundation of what we do day by day. Our worship goes beyond singing and we have been encouraged to pursue God in all aspects of life. Prayer and worship are built into our events and gatherings. Specific prayer requests are passed through text messages in our prayer line. Through this we pray for individuals in the church as well as people/situations we’re connected with.

In addition, space for personal and corporate prayer is available at our midweek groups. At various points in the year we gather for 24 hours of prayer whilst, in recent years, groups have met for early morning prayer before work and on Thursday nights to worship and pray. During the pandemic our small groups and prayer have taken place over Zoom. At present there are a range of mid-week groups including three Life Groups, a men’s group, an addiction recovery Bible study and a creative café.



We make space for creativity in our gatherings and encourage creativity in our congregation throughout the week. We facilitate a creatives group which helps people

grow and develop their creativity with God. Over the years we have run workshops on art, music, writing, and movement. We have partnered with evangelism events run by Source and Christians Against Poverty (CAP) and have helped to establish prayer and meditation stations. We have a worship art team who paint during Sunday services and a movement team who work with flags and banners. Currently our craft and coffee evenings are via Zoom.



Local Church Review

The last LCR for Whiteinch Church was in 2015. This was a very positive and affirming process for us as a church. We were urged to keep on doing what we were doing: engaging with our community, sustaining outreach that is appropriate and transformational and developing a community in which worship, fellowship and discipleship is central.

The review committee noted that we were ambitious to serve the needs of Whiteinch Parish and that our vision of developing an integrated approach to care, particularly in the area of mental health care provision, was both innovative and challenging in its scope.

APOSTOLIC AND EVANGELISM

The vast majority of people who come to faith today do so through the witness of their friends and family. We know that relationships are key to reaching out so as a church we want to be equipping each person to share their faith with their friends, family and colleagues. We believe that it is vital to provide ongoing training in personal faith sharing.

We look for ways to create stepping-stones to help people on the edges of faith move closer to that personal encounter. For many the first step on that journey is to discover that Christians are good and able to help. That is why we believe in demonstrating the gospel before explaining it in words.

Until early 2020 we had a symbiotic relationship with Whiteinch Transformation, a charity seeking to meet the needs of our local community through Love Whiteinch, Foodbank, Whiteinch Wee Ones, CAP, Hope Connections and Source (a missional outreach and discipleship project working with spiritual seekers). As things have changed, we have continued to partner with local charities and churches in addressing the challenges faced by people in our local community.

We have also been a 'sending' church, training and equipping the body to go to other contexts to minister. We have a long history of building up leaders who are called to serve and lead, both locally and further afield. One of the ways we have facilitated this is through the year-long training course from Forge. This has helped those who have relocated from Whiteinch to different places to establish or re-establish worshipping communities, within Glasgow (currently Possilpark and Ruchazie) and internationally. We stay connected in a variety of ways to those who have been sent from our church.

The church has also equipped folks who have remained in Whiteinch and who feel called to serve within the local context. Over the years we have run Alpha and Youth Alpha for people in our lives who are seeking to engage in questions of faith. We enjoy getting together regularly for food and fun with a view to making this available to those who want to join us. As well as inviting people in, we also go to meet people where they are at. We have planted missional communities in various contexts, taking the word of God and the good news of Jesus out with us. These have included groups in the gaming community, spiritual seekers, young people and those in addiction recovery.

Our church is committed to supporting men and women who are on their journey of recovery from addiction. This is a very important and essential part of our outreach into our community. To that end we support Rainbow House, a residential rehabilitation centre, and Move On, a supported accommodation unit which encourages and supports our guys and girls to re-integrate into the community. Both these organisations are part of Crossreach. We also have strong connections to organisations across the city that seek to promote recovery in the community through partnership working.



ECUMENICAL CONTEXT AND OTHER PARTNERS

Our outward focus has brought us alongside many partners (local, regional and national) who seek to bring hope. These include:

Rainbow House

The Wheel Trust

Scripture Union

Glasgow City Mission

West Glasgow New Church (WGNC)

WGNC have a building in our parish and now run the CAP centre that we support. We have established links with them, working together to provide activities for children, young people and families. The Leadership Teams connect regularly, seeking to work even more closely together in the future.



WORLD CHURCH

Our missional focus is not limited to the community we live in. We support our family on mission across the world (short term and long term). We currently financially and prayerfully support two families, one with WEC (Worldwide Evangelisation for Christ) on another continent and one in another part of Glasgow with Inner Change. We also support those going out on short term mission trips (such as Harvest School with Iris Ministries). Financial support is given to Tearfund.

<https://www.irisglobal.org/>

<https://www.suscotland.org.uk/>

<https://www.tearfund.org/>

www.innerchange.org

<https://wec-uk.org/>

www.forgescotland.com



PASTORAL CARE, HEALING AND PROPHETIC MINISTRIES

Our desire is that Whiteinch Church continues to be a place where people can come and find connection with Father, Son and Holy Spirit. To this end, we make space available for this connection whenever we meet and in whatever way is appropriate. We encourage each other to regularly take time to pray, read the Bible and seek God. This is both an individual and corporate journey of renewal and we invite folks to join us in this journey for however long they are able to walk with us.

As a church family, we believe that Jesus is in the business of making all things new and that includes us! There is no sickness in Heaven and so when we pray in the words of the Lord's Prayer 'Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven' we expect that to happen. We are a community which is continually calling down Heaven to Earth.

Prayers for healing are offered during our Sunday morning services, but in addition to this formal arrangement, we encourage all of our church family to bring Heaven to Earth where they are. Practically, this means that we want to support and bless those who are involved in healthcare at any level but it also means that we are constantly looking for ways to bring healing into the lives of others by what we do and say.

There is recognition that for all of us there are times when we hurt on the inside rather than the outside. Over the years, we've developed Saorsa, our inner healing ministry, which is informed by Sozo, Freedom in Christ and Restoring The Foundations, as well as being grounded in the science of psychology. Healing for the Heart, of which Saorsa is a part, is now a charity which aims to improve mental, emotional health in individuals, communities and organisations. Many of our congregation have connections with this charity and continue to be blessed through its work and ministry.

In addition to any formal ministry appointments, our Leadership Team offer pastoral support to anyone who needs a space to process and pray. Pastoral care within the church is picked up by a number of individuals who keep an eye out for those in need. Through connections into church groups we seek to care for one another and build each other up.

"Follow the way of love and eagerly desire the gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy. For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but God... But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort." 1 Corinthians 14:1-3

From the beginning, Whiteinch Church has been involved in prophetic ministry as part of our commitment to following the pattern of fivefold ministry as set out in Scripture (for example, Ephesians 4). Like all spiritual gifts, the small groups in church provide a space for developing the prophetic and we strongly encourage accountability in this. Words may be given publicly on Sunday morning at the discretion of the leader in charge. Since 2006 we have facilitated various prophetic evangelism outreaches, mainly through Source fairs. We have also benefitted from a variety of different prophetic ministry trainings.



TEACHING AND TRAINING

Our desire is that Whiteinch Church of Scotland would continue to 'equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.' (Ephesians 4:12). We do this by helping people identify their skills, gifts, and calling, and provide access to training resources either through the church or through external organisations.

This includes:

Emotionally Healthy Leadership, Emotionally Healthy Spirituality, Emotionally Healthy Relationships

North Atlantic Streams Courses – Art of Hearing God, Understanding Dreams and Visions.

Source Workshops – equipping in prophetic evangelism and discipleship.

Kingdom Mentoring from Steven and Helen Anderson

Saorsa Introduction to Inner Healing

Trauma Informed Faith Communities

CAP Money Course

Forge Course

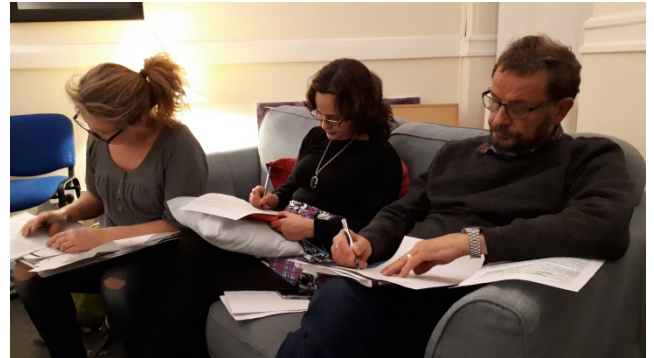
Scottish Public Leaders (Evangelical Alliance)

Prophetic Ministry and Prayer Ministry Training

Building a Discipleship Culture (3DM)

Children and youth work training including Deep Impact

The SHAPE Course - discovering more about your Spiritual Gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality and Experiences using questionnaires and reflection tools.



We also have small groups that focus on Biblical understanding and application.

'Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.'
Romans 12:2

YOUTH AND CHILDREN

“Teach children how they should live, and they will remember it all their life.” Proverbs 22:6

In Whiteinch Church the work with children and youth is a key part of who we are and we are seeking to develop this further. On Sunday mornings when we were able to meet in person we had Revolution for children in P1-P5 and Encounter Renewal for those in P6-S2 every 2 weeks. We are looking to grow our body of volunteers for this crucial work of discipling multiple generations including developing a crèche team.



We have a number of teenagers and young adults who we have journeyed with over the years, with some of those now taking an active part as adult leaders with us or in other places. This work has taken a variety of forms from monthly Saturday night events, mid-week meal and chat, to Sunday afternoon deeper bible study and worship. Although there has been no formal youth work since summer 2019 we continue to have a heart for the young people in our community. One of the most significant times of connection and blessing has been our summer camp. In partnership with SU Scotland we have taken young people from P6 to S6 away for the annual ‘camp week’ for over 20 years. Historically there has also been chaplaincy work with Whiteinch primary and an SU group. Pupils going on to Hyndland Secondary school also have SU input via the Wheel Trust.

THOUGHTS FROM THE CONGREGATION

“Whiteinch is a big part of our life.”

“It’s been a loving and supportive church.”

What Whiteinch Church means to me

“Change is here to stay and so are we”.

“Whiteinch has been a wee church plant with 6 people, to growing and becoming like a college and university. A place to learn. It’s become a hospital where sick people can come. It has been other things over the years and all the time it’s a mixture of all of that.”

NEW TO WHITEINCH CHURCH

Those attending Whiteinch Church come from diverse origins, cultures, countries and continents. People told us that they and their parents are from Israel, Australia, Ivory Coast, Ireland, Scotland, Britain, New Zealand, USA, India and Zimbabwe. We cover a wide age range from 0 to over 80!



What made people
come and stay in
Whiteinch?

"I wanted to get involved in the church and here I have been given the opportunity to do so."

"I had a dream to go back to church and when I came with my friend the first sermon touched me."

"I feel that God is here in Whiteinch church."

"We followed our daughter and felt welcomed here."

"I felt drawn into the church by the Holy Spirit."

"For this season I feel that Whiteinch is the place God wants me to be."

"When I joined the church, this verse was constantly in my mind Psalm 133:1-3 'Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity... for there the Lord has commanded the blessing...'"

When people come to join our church we seek to welcome them in, meeting them where they're at and encouraging them in their faith journey.

"When I joined the church, we had a meeting with...different team leaders where we shared our stories and our hopes as Christians. We also have been asked 'How can we get involved?' When there are opportunities, newcomers are approached to see if they want to get involved on the other hand, newcomers can also approach team leaders and tell them that they want to get involved. Information is well shared and team leaders are very open."

ELDERS AND STAFFING

We are governed by a unitary constitution of five elders (two male and three female). The church employs an administrator one day a week, who is a wonderful support for keeping things running smoothly and currently working from home. At the moment we do not rent office space but we have previously maintained office and meeting spaces in the parish.

THE MANSE

The manse is situated in the parish and is a mid-terrace property of over 100 years old. There is on street parking and entry is through the front garden via a paved path. The downstairs comprises a living room, study/home office, shower room with WC and dining kitchen with sliding doors to the back garden. The upstairs comprises four bedrooms and a bathroom. The manse is in good structural condition and is currently being refreshed internally and externally in anticipation of welcoming a new minister. The manse is within walking distance of the Whiteinch Centre where we worship, Victoria Park, the local primary schools and a number of shops.



STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE

The majority of our church family give through tithing. We teach on this regularly on a Sunday and, as individuals make a commitment to being a part of the church in Whiteinch, they are invited to participate. Because we do not have a church building, our finances are relatively straightforward and uncomplicated. Our last set of annual accounts show a small surplus in our unrestricted funds and are available on our website. Our accounts for 2020 are currently with the accountant and once again show a surplus in the unrestricted funds. It is our policy to hold 3 months of operational costs as reserves which we currently do.

WEBSITE LINKS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

www.whiteinchchurch.org

www.whiteinchcentre.org.uk

<https://www.healingfortheheart.co.uk/>

<https://www.facebook.com/WhiteinchChurchofScotland/>

https://simd.scot/#/simd2020_20pc/BTTFTT/14/-4.3430/55.8753/