IV.

REPORT

OF THE

WELFARE OF YOUTH & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

1. Introduction

In the Gospel according to Mark we read the words of our Lord to his disciples, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14). One commentator says the following: *We must never allow ourselves to suppose that little children's souls may be safely left alone. They are never too young to learn evil and sin. They are never too young to receive religious impressions. They think in their childish way about God, and their souls, and the world to come, far sooner and far deeper than most people are aware. They each have a conscience. God has mercifully not left himself without a witness in their hearts, fallen and corrupt as their natures are. They each have a soul that will live forever in heaven or in hell. We cannot begin too soon to endeavour to bring them to Christ*.

Whilst recognising that the primary responsibility for the welfare of youth lies with their parents, the Committee have been active in seeking the spiritual welfare of the young people within the Church.

2. Sabbath School Syllabus

The updated Sabbath School Workbooks offer excellent material for Sabbath schools. The infant (Grade One) material is on a three-year cycle, with the other grades on a four-year cycle.

3. Sabbath School Exams

The annual examinations were held and attracted twenty-seven entrants. Of these, twelve were from Grade 2 (Junior) and fifteen from the Bible Class Grade. The Bible Class winner was Matthew Keddie of Shettleston, and the Grade 2 winner was John MacDonald of Stornoway. A full list appears as an Appendix to this report. The Committee are grateful to those who give of their time to prepare, print and distribute the examination papers and those that mark them.

4. Maurine Murchison Memorial Prize

The Committee revised the Memorial Prize this year. The purpose of the prize is to aid Scripture memorisation, both of the list of the Books of the Bible, and also individual passages of Scripture. There are now five sections aimed at ages ranging from 4-16 years. Grade 1: Psalm 23; Grade 2: Books of the New Testament and Psalm 100; Grade 3: Books of the Old Testament and Psalm 84; Grade 4: Matthew 5:1-12 and Psalm 67; and Grade 5: Ephesians 1:1-12 and Psalm 46. It is hoped that this revision will increase the number of participants in the scheme.

The number of children involved is up on last year and the Committee are encouraged by this upturn in participation (see Appendix). The Committee are grateful to Dr Murchison for continuing to provide the funds that enable the Committee to offer this award. Participants receive a book token to the value of £10.

5. Shorter Catechism Diploma Scheme

The Committee are delighted to see that there were seven youngsters who achieved different awards, including five from the United States of America (see Appendix). As with the Maurine Murchison Award, the Committee would encourage parents and Sabbath Schools to seek ways in which they can promote this worthwhile scheme. Those attaining the Gold Award receive a leather-bound Bible.

6. All-Age Holiday

The General Assembly agreed last year that the All-Age Holiday would not be held this year. The Committee, conscious of disappointment in the wider Church, have been looking at ways whereby it might be possible to hold the holiday biennially. The Committee have to report that, despite advertising for a new

Organiser, none have been forthcoming. Without an Organiser, there can be no future for the All-Age Holiday.

7. Youth Camps

As in previous years, the Junior Camp and Senior Camp shared the excellent facilities available in Badaguish, near Aviemore. However, due to an administrative error,the facility at Badaguish was double-booked. This resulted in the camp having to relocate to the Kingsview Centre in and around Inverness for the first few days. This enabled the campers to worship in FC(C) congregations around Inverness on the Lord's Day.

There were 17 junior campers and 6 seniors. Rev. Greg MacDonald led the Junior Camp and the topic was "Why we do what we do" covering church distinctives. Rev. James MacInnes led the Senior camp and his topic was "A Christian Worldview". The campers were attentive in the daily dorm discussions and in the projects in the afternoon. The willing team of leaders comprised Joan MacKintosh, Maryanne Gillies and Isobel Campbell, covering the catering, with Kevin MacDonald, Katrina MacKay, Matthew Kirkland, Rachel Craig, Sophie McGlynn, Abigail Mackay and Neil Smith. The campers engaged enthusiastically in an exhausting variety of activities, both around Inverness and in Aviemore.

Due to the exceptional circumstances, the camps reported higher costs last year, and an overall loss of approximately £1500.

The Committee express its thanks to the Kingsview Christian Centre for their help with accommodation, and to the Congregations of Inverness, Duthil-Dores and Kilmorack & Strathglass for hospitality given to the campers. The Committee commend this work to the prayers of the denomination.

8. Christian Education

The Committee maintains an active interest in the vital area of Christian Education. The Committee receives updates on Providence Christian School, Stornoway, and Sunrise Christian School, Glasgow.

During the year, the Committee has been seeking to implement the finding of last year's Assembly. Work on a page for the Church website has begun, and it is hoped that this will be available in the near future. The Committee has organised a Conference on Christian Education. After consultation with Presbyteries, it was agreed to hold the Conference on Christian Education in Partick Free Church (Continuing), Glasgow, at 7.00 pm on Friday, 24th May, DV, immediately following the General Assembly. The Committee express its thanks to the American brethren who have agreed to speak at the Conference on their experiences of Christian education. A dedicated fund for Christian Education has yet to be implemented. The Committee commend all those involved in the Christian education of youth, whether at home or in schools, to the prayers of the Church.

9. Bible Bee

The Committee was delighted to be informed that Grace Wanliss from our Greenville congregation won the National Bible Bee of America, a prestigious and very demanding competition in Biblical memorisation. The Committee congratulate her on her achievement, and commend the memorisation of Scripture to our children and young people.

10. Clerk

The Committee wish to record their thanks to their Clerk, Mrs Isobel A. Macleod.

RICHARD R. ROSS, *Convener*
ALASDAIR J. MACLEOD, *Vice-convener*

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the Welfare of Youth & Education Committee and thank the Committee, especially the Convener and Vice-convener;

2. The General Assembly thank Mrs Isobel Ann Macleod for her work as Clerk;

3. The General Assembly commend to all the Sabbath School and Bible Class workbooks;

4. The General Assembly thank those who teach in the Sabbath Schools and who so freely give of their time;

5. The General Assembly record their thanks to those involved in preparing, setting and marking the annual Sabbath School and Bible Class examination papers;

6. The General Assembly commend the revised Maurine Murchison Memorial Prize and congratulate those who participated this year;

7. The General Assembly commend the Shorter Catechism Diploma Scheme and encourage Sabbath School Superintendents to continue to promote it;

8. The General Assembly thank Kingsview Christian Centre for helping to accommodate our Youth camps at short notice;

9. The General Assembly thank Rev. James MacInnes and Rev. Greg MacDonald for their faithful leadership of the Youth Camps; they also thank Joan MacKintosh, Maryanne Gillies, Isobel Campbell, Kevin MacDonald, Katrina Mackay, Matthew Kirkland, Rachel Craig, Sophie McGlynn, Abigail Mackay and Neil Smith, and would commend the work of the camps to the prayers of the Church;

10. The General Assembly encourage the Committee to establish a dedicated fund to support Christian Education, whether at home or in Christian schools;

11. The General Assembly note with approval the organisation of a conference in Glasgow dedicated to Christian Education, and commend this conference to the wider Church;

12. The General Assembly commend all those involved in Christian education to the prayers of the Church.

APPENDIX

Sabbath School and Bible Class Examinations 2018-2019

The following is a list of all who took part in the examinations and the prize winners:

Bible Class Grade

15 took part in the examination

Prizewinner:	Matthew Keddie, Shettleston
Cross	Hugh MacDonald, Heidi MacLeod, Murray MacDonald, Felicity MacLeod
Duthil-Dores	Emily Hutton, Kenneth Hutton
Knock & Point	Alexander Macleod, Ruaraidh Macleod
Shettleston	Matthew Keddie, Elizabeth Keddie
Stornoway	Lydia MacDonald, Thomas Craig, Susanna MacDonald, Sarah Craig,
Tarbat	Ethan C. Macleod

Sabbath School Grade 2

12 took part in the examination

Prizewinner:	John MacDonald, Stornoway
Cross	Annie MacDonald, Owen MacDonald
Duthil-Dores	Callum Arie Morrison, Lewis Fraser, Ewen Hutton, Jonathon Brooks Lois Brooks, Calvin Nicolson
Shettleston	Thomas Keddie, Hannah Keddie
Stornoway	John MacDonald, Katie MacKenzie,
Tarbat	Malcolm S. MacLeod

Maurine Murchison Memorial Prize

Grade 1	Portree	Benjamin D. Ross
	Stornoway	Marybeth MacDonald
	Duthil-Dores	Joanna Brooks
Grade 2	Duthil-Dores	Anna Marie Morrison
	Stornoway	Peter MacDonald, Kenneth MacDonald
Grade 3	Duthil-Dores	Callum Arie Morrison
	Stornoway	John MacDonald, Lydia MacDonald, Susanna MacDonald
Grade 4	Duthil-Dores	Jonathan Brooks, Lois Brooks

Catechism Diploma

Gold	Greenville USA	Grace E. Wanliss
	Stornoway	John MacDonald
Silver	Greenville USA	Grace H. Reeder, Zoë L. Reeder,
	Stornoway	Sarah Craig
Bronze	Greenville USA	Charis B. Humby, Sophia J. Wanliss