

## IV.

# REPORT

### OF THE

## WELFARE OF YOUTH & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

### 1. Introduction

It has been another difficult year for the work of the Church. ‘Lockdowns’ along with other measures introduced in an attempt to reduce the spread and mitigate the effects of the Covid-19 virus again impacted the Church’s outreach to young people. During this period Bible Classes and Sabbath Schools have used Zoom or similar online platforms to continue their work with the rising generation. Nevertheless, the effect of these changes has been almost universally negative. We leave with the Lord things that may yet issue of a more positive nature from this time: *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose* (Rom. 8:28). Outwardly, the result has been to greatly weaken the contact between local Congregations and young people growing up around us. Children and young people from homes where one or both parents attend church have felt the effects, but those who come from homes where neither parent at this time attends church have been even more severely impacted, and it is feared that some contacts may be difficult to re-establish even now that all the restrictions have been finally removed.

We are thankful to the Lord for those parents and teachers in our Congregations who have continued faithfully teaching the Scriptures to the children and young people of our denomination. In their wanderings between Egypt and Israel, the Lord’s people have been reminded that, no matter how trying the circumstances, they have a duty to teach the rising generation: *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.* (Deut. 6:4-7) While we seek to remain diligent in utilising every suitable means to make Jesus Christ known to young folk, we trust that the Lord, by His Holy Spirit, will bless these efforts far beyond anything we might at this time anticipate.

### 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. The use of the Church’s materials for the instruction of our youth in Bible Classes and Sabbath Schools is heartily commended to our Congregations. The Committee understand, however, that some Congregations seek the flexibility of using materials produced elsewhere and trust that the wise and prayerful use of good quality material will benefit the young people attending our Congregations.

### 3. Sabbath School Exams

In another difficult year due to the Covid restrictions, all parents, Sabbath School teachers and scholars who were able to continue the work of Bible Classes and Sabbath Schools for the 2021-22 Session are once more warmly commended for their diligence. The examinations attracted 25 entrants in all, one more than last year. Of these, 14 (12 in 2021) were from Grade 2 (Junior), and 11 (12 in 2021) from the Bible Class Grade. The Bible Class winner was Lydia MacDonald (Stornoway), and the Grade 2 prizewinner was Hannah Keddie (Duthil-Dores). A full list appears as an Appendix to this Report.

The Committee commend all who entered the exam and congratulate the prizewinners. The winners receive a plaque and a book. The Committee, as always, are most grateful to those who give of their time to prepare, print and distribute the examination papers, and also to those who mark them.

#### **4. Maurine Murchison Memorial Prize**

This Memorial Prize involves the memorising of Scripture portions and books of the Bible (depending on the Grades) by young people in the Church. The Committee has agreed to expand the number of grades to encourage further memorisation of Scripture by the young people. This year, 15 children took part from 4 Congregations (see Appendix). This compared with 4 Congregations in the previous year. Participants receive a book token to the value of £10.

#### **5. Shorter Catechism Diploma Scheme**

This year there were 19 entrants for the Catechism Diploma (17 entrants were from the USA). The Committee express their admiration for the diligence shown by our North American brethren in catechising their young people.

As with the Maurine Murchison Memorial Prize, the Committee would encourage Kirk Sessions, Sabbath Schools and parents to seek ways in which they can promote this worthwhile scheme among the youth of the Church. Those attaining the Gold Award receive a leather-bound Bible.

#### **6. Camps 2022**

Following the removal of Government restrictions relating to Covid-19, the Committee are delighted to say that there will be a Summer Camp this year. The uptake of places for this year's camp has been most encouraging. It is hoped that the return of the camps will be a blessing to all who are able to attend. The Committee are actively looking to enable young folk from the wider denomination to attend. In particular, the Committee have in mind the possibility of places for a few young people from Mexico.

#### **7. Youth Conference 2022**

The Committee had planned to organize a residential Youth Conference in 2021 for young people aged 16-25, at Ratagan Youth Hostel, Glenshiel. Sadly, due to the ongoing difficulties surrounding the Covid-19 restrictions and other unexpected changes, these plans had to be put off. It is hoped that, with the Lord's blessing, the planned conference may yet take place and even become a regular annual event.

#### **8. Education**

The Committee continue to provide modest grants to Christian home-schooling families and to several faithful Christian schools known to them. To further encourage Christian Education, as previously reported, the Committee have prepared a report on Christian Education Resources which will be placed on the Church's website for public access.

#### **9. Clerk**

The Committee wish to record their thanks to their Clerk, Mrs Isobel A. Macleod, for all her valuable work on behalf of the Committee.

TIMOTHY J. MCGLYNN, *Convener*  
NORMAN SMITH, *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 the Church the Sabbath School and Bible Class workbooks;
4. The General Assembly thank those who so freely give of their time to teach in the Sabbath Schools throughout the Church;

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 Maurine Murchison Memorial Prize and congratulate those who participated this year;
7. The General Assembly commend the Shorter Catechism Diploma Scheme and encourage Kirk Sessions and Sabbath School Superintendents to continue to promote it; they congratulate those who successfully participated in the Diploma Scheme this year;
8. The General Assembly thank the Lord for the removal of restrictions on camps, thus allowing the return of Youth Camps this year;
9. The General Assembly continue to encourage the Committee to do all it can to support Christian Education, whether in the home or in Christian schools;
10. The General Assembly commend all those involved in Christian Education, whether Christian Schools or Christian home-schooling, to the prayers of the Church;
11. The General Assembly commend the ongoing efforts to establish an annual Youth Conference and commend such efforts to the prayerful support of the wider Church.

## APPENDIX

### Sabbath School and Bible Class Examinations 2021-2022

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

#### Bible Class Grade

11 took part in the examination (previous year — 13)

<b>Prizewinner:</b>	Lydia MacDonald
<b>Ayr</b>	Sarah Craig
<b>Cross</b>	Annie MacDonald, Heidi MacLeod
<b>Duthil-Dores</b>	Jonathan Brooks, Lois Brooks, Lewis Fraser, Thomas Keddie, Callum Arie Morrison
<b>Stornoway</b>	John MacDonald, Lydia MacDonald, Katie Mackenzie

#### Sabbath School Grade 2

14 took part in the examination (previous year — 11)

<b>Prizewinner:</b>	Hannah Keddie, Duthil-Dores
<b>Cross</b>	Owen MacDonald, Kenneth Iain Macleod
<b>Duthil-Dores</b>	Katie Bell, Joanna Brooks, Abigail Keddie, Hannah Keddie, Anna Marie Morrison, Annabell Nicolson, Calvin Nicolson
<b>Stornoway</b>	George Kenneth MacDonald, Mary Beth MacDonald, Peter MacDonald, Joel MacKenzie, Jack Alan Macleod

#### Maurine Murchison Memorial Prize

15 took part (previous year — 14)

<b>Grade 1</b>	Ayr	Lottie Anderson, Summer Hall
	Duthil-Dores	Beth Bell, Jack Bell, Lily Grace Morrison, Alick Nicolson
	Snizort	Maisie Macdonald, Annabel Macleod, John Macleod, Tormod Macleod
<b>Grade 2</b>	Stornoway	David Gillies, Talitha MacKenzie, Grace Macleod, Carys Shields
<b>Grade 3</b>	Duthil-Dores	Katie Bell

#### Catechism Diploma

19 took part (previous year — 16)

<b>Gold:</b> 39-81	Greenville	Janelle Alethia Ekpo, Josiah Morton Vernon
<b>Silver:</b> 39-81	Greenville	Andrew Mackenzie Pike
	Stornoway	George Kenneth MacDonald, Peter MacDonald
<b>Bronze:</b> 1-38	Greenville	Emma Louise Carney, Maria Carney,
		Olivia Kay Carney, Cameron Daniel Pike,
		Nathanael Irvin Reeder, James Rollins,
		Lydia Jean Setzer, Benjamin Isaac Vernon,
		Julia Margaret Vernon, Cameron Knox Wanliss