

# Momentum

October 2022

## Numbers Rising

The Centre saw 150 new people join in the past month. There have been a total of 1400 visits to the centre since it opened in April.

## And the youngest member is...

Welcome to Dmytro, who was born in September. Delighted mum, Alinochko, is pictured here with her two boys.



## Big thank you to ISL and Nestlé

More than 40 Ukrainian children have benefitted from the sports clothing generously donated by The International School of Lausanne. While the notebooks, given by Nestlé are really useful in our language classes and The Centre's everyday running.

## Safeguarding Training

Many of our volunteers have successfully completed safeguarding training. Provided by the Church of Scotland, it aims to ensure the security and wellbeing of the people we support, some of whom are potentially vulnerable. It helps us recognise potential 'red flags,' when we ought to signal our concerns to our safeguarding coordinator, Gillean MacLean.



## The Centre: stronger together

In a few short months our community has grown in size and in spirit. The range of services has expanded to six language classes serving more than 65 children and adults. Monica Aoudé takes Thursday's French class, helped by Yana Turner, who translates, and native French speaker Tania Le Cunff. Sadly, our first volunteer English teacher, Geoffrey Peek, has now retired, but fortunately Ann Bless has taken over. Since September, we have two new Ukraine-born teachers, providing four extra classes on Sundays. Alona Korop teaches adults, and Olena Cherenkova, who arrived in Switzerland in April, teaches children and teenagers aged 11 to 16. Alona already worked in Switzerland before the war. Olena, was an English teacher in Kharkiv and arrived here in April. Olena said: "English is very popular in Ukraine. It is easier for me to explain in Ukrainian to students now learning English in Swiss schools in French. French is a new language for them." Student, Tanya, age 15, says she needs English as she hopes to study in the States. Others need French to work. Viktoriia wants to be able to teach children as she did in Ukraine, and Yulia hopes to get a job as a computer engineer. A driving force at The Centre, volunteer Lyudmila Bahmut, says she is overwhelmed by the community spirit: "It is wonderful to see how our community is doing so much to help each other and we are so grateful to The Centre for making it possible."



## Top of the Class

Cake and gifts for our teachers flanked by some of our students and helpers on World Teachers' Day.



### Who we are

The Ukraine Day Centre is a not-for-profit association opened on April 28th. It is an ecumenical initiative between Our Lady of Faith, Christ Church and the Scots Kirk. We support those fleeing Ukraine irrespective of language, race, faith or gender. The Centre services are free.

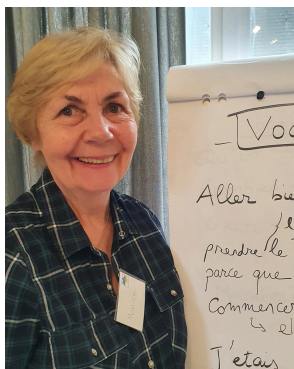
### Church Christmas Bazaar

The Scots Kirk and Christ Church are holding their Christmas bazaars on Nov 5th and Nov 26th respectively. Delicious marmalades, preserves, mince pies, and cakes are on the menu. This year the Scots Kirk bbq includes Ukrainian specialities such as shashlik.

### More dates for your Diary

**Nov 20th:** forum on centre's future.

**Dec 25th, 29th, Jan 1st:** The Centre will be closed.



## Meet the Volunteers

### Monica Aoudé

Despite a long and successful career teaching in many different European countries, Monica still finds her new pupils refreshing. "The experience is rich indeed," she says. She has spent her professional life teaching both French and English in her native Scotland, Spain, France, as well as Switzerland. She may be used to the classroom, but for a lot of her mature students at the Centre, it is their first

time in a classroom for many years. While it is a challenge starting a new language, Monica is delighted with their progress: "Teaching is always a very rewarding job and perhaps particularly so in the present situation where, although we want to give, we end up receiving as much if not more than we give."

Born in Egypt to an English mother and Swiss father, Ann Bless is perfectly bilingual. She has worked as a language teacher throughout her life and, like Monica, has also moved around a lot. The family was forced to move back to Europe after the Suez Crisis. "Nasser threw us out," she laughs. Ann made her home in the Netherlands with her Dutch husband. Switzerland is very much home again now, after the mother of three returned to live in Switzerland in 2003 and where she is still hard at work. She is employed as a freelance, teaching English at EPFL and other organisations, often to experts in the field of science and medicine whom she helps perfect their language skills. Luckily she finds time to volunteer for us on Thursdays. "I come out of the lessons on such a high," she says enthusiastically.



Ann Bless



### Vouchers ease rush for winter clothing

Our clothing team has been extremely busy in the basement, particularly with the change of seasons as people switch to warmer clothes. High numbers mean we have had to limit access to four people in the room at a time. We have also brought in a voucher system designed to help new arrivals. They now receive a blue voucher when they register, which allows them to take whatever they need. They can visit the 'shop' from 14:00. Everyone else receives a yellow voucher allowing them two items per person. They can enter from 15:30. One of the organisers, Kathy Overlack, says despite high demand, they can currently only accept donations of winter coats, shoes/boots and rainwear. Clothing has proved a hugely useful resource for Centre users who really appreciate it. We could not have provided this service without the help of our donors.

### How can you help ?

We especially welcome volunteers and really appreciate donations of winter clothes, money and food.

### For donations:

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