

Weekly Newsletter: 26th September 2022

Reflection: October Is Pastoral Care Month at Holyrood

By Joe Barnard

Do you ever sit down and imagine where Holyrood might be in a year's time? All of us would love to see a stream of unbelievers finding their way into the church. We would be thrilled by the prospect of more engagement with the local community – of children's work, youth work, coffee mornings, foodbanks, ESL courses, Christianity Explored courses, and so on. Personally, I get goosebumps at the thought of people meeting on Montgomery Street throughout the week for prayer, training, and discipleship. These elements are important ingredients of the vision of any gospel church. Wherever the good news of Christ takes root, evangelism and discipleship are flowers that soon blossom. However, if our future vision of Holyrood is going to be complete – at least complete according to a New Testament blueprint – then we cannot limit our imagining to the scene above. Alongside outreach and discipleship, one other dimension of church life must be kept in view, namely, loving one another. If we are to be the city on a hill that Jesus intends for us to be, we must fulfil his commandment to love one another as he has loved us.

To help us grow into a community of loving support, October is going to be pastoral care month at Holyrood. My hope is that this becomes an annual tradition. In future years, just as we will have various campaigns to promote evangelism and discipleship in the church, we will also take time each year to bring attention to the pastoral needs within our community. The basic objectives of this time will be threefold: (1) to increase awareness of needs within the community; (2) to build competence so that we feel more equipped to help each other; and (3) to create a stimulus to reenergize our efforts to go out and get busy in the urgent work of building each other up in the faith.

Now what will this look like this year?

First, the Pastoral Care Team has invited Lynn Millar of the Wellness Centre at St. Mungo's Church to lead a training session at our Equip meeting on 2nd October. The focus of this session will be some general training on helping people who are struggling with anxiety, depression, grief, and other common struggles. There are times when we avoid reaching out to people due to the paralysis of feeling incompetent to help. This session will remind us of some of the simple things that we can do to express love and concern. *Please consider, if possible, attending the session in person.* The evening will go much better – and have a greater impact on our church family – if we get a good assortment of people from the church.

Second, in our home groups in October we will be looking at Psalms that deal honestly with topics like fear, spiritual anxiety, and grief. Home groups are a vital part of the structure of pastoral care at Holyrood. I want

to encourage us to use these sessions to be more candid about our emotional and spiritual struggles. There is nothing worse than superficial religion. All of us have old scars and untended wounds. Let's try to take small steps toward making home group meetings a place where burdens are shared and loving support is provided.

Third, the topic of caring for each other will be a focus of conversation in other small group settings. The women's book group will be reading *Together through the Storm* by Sally Sims. The session will begin to read and discuss *The Shepherd Leader* by Timothy Witmer. The men's discipleship groups will use select 'hymn workouts' to think about relevant topics. And finally, the reflections in the weekly newsletter and the content of the prayer bulletin will drip feed further information about what it means to fulfil Christ's command in John 13:34.

Let me end by issuing a challenge. Thinking about something is not the same as doing something. The real hope of October is not to have intellectual discussions or to provide formal training. The real goal is for us to be inspired to show love and concern for people who we might otherwise overlook due to the busyness of life. So here is my challenge to members of Holyrood in October: Find one person in the church family each week that you can encourage or support. There are 100 ways to show such love. You can schedule a coffee; you can see a film together; you can write a letter; you can visit a care home; you can commit to prayer; you can take a walk; you can sit and read the Bible together; the options are endless.

Just imagine if all of us did this – if 70 or 80 people found a fresh way to show the love of Christ to another person each week during October. That's around 300 acts of kindness in one month. There is no way of calculating the difference this would make in our community. There is no way of measuring the joy this would bring the heart of our Saviour.

Peter Swinson – Funeral Arrangements

This Wednesday (28th September) there will be a private burial in Newbattle Cemetery and then a Thanksgiving Service at 12 noon in the church building.

Everyone in the church family is warmly invited to join Heather at Carberry Tower (Carberry Tower Mansion House, Near Musselburgh, EH21 8PY <https://www.carberrytower.com/>) for light refreshments from 2pm.

Please continue to remember Heather, Jo and the family in your prayers.

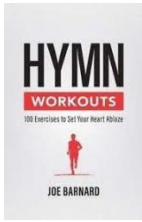
Men's Discipleship – this Thursday

Joe is running a Men's Discipleship Group on Thursday mornings at 10.30am in the church. Tea and coffee will be provided and Joe will be using hymns as the basis of the discussion.

Equip – Pastoral Focus

Our next Equip Session will be this Sunday (2nd October) at 6pm and we're looking forward to having Lynn Miller along to speak to us. Lynn is Director of Counselling at St Mungo's Church, Balerno and her session will be informative and interactive.

Hymn Workouts: 100 Exercises to Set Your Heart Ablaze



Joe's new book is now out! You can order a copy from amazon [here](#) and feel free to give it an honest review once you've read it.

Let Liz know if you would like a copy and she is happy to order one for you (Liz@holyroode-vangelical.org)

Scottish Women's Bible Convention – this Saturday

The Scottish Women's Bible Convention is 'a day of faithful Bible teaching by women for women with the Lord Jesus as our focus.' It is taking place in Charlotte Chapel on Saturday 1st October from 10am until 3pm.



Rachel Sloan will be speaking from Ephesians and Romans on the theme on adopted as daughters. More details are available [here](#) and get your tickets [here](#).

OMF Scotland Tour – Be Exalted

Be Exalted

Edinburgh | Saturday 8th Oct | 10.30am-2pm

"Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow..." (Phil 2:9-10a)

We live in a time that could easily be characterised by crisis. Conflict, climate, Covid and the cost of living has brought turmoil that both unites and divides humanity. The strong seek self-preservation while the weak struggle to eat. But these are also days of opportunity. Technology, immigration, creation care and the rapid growth of the church in the global south open the door for fresh and exciting approaches to sharing the good news of Jesus across our streets and across the world.

Join us in Edinburgh to hear how God's people are serving the unreached billions of East Asia and how we, in Scotland, can unite with the global church to proclaim the good news of Jesus until every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Speakers:

- James and Kirsty – recently returned from serving unreached peoples in East Asia since 2006. They have experienced God's faithfulness through earthquakes, police detentions, violent protests and much more!
- Lorna Ferguson – has been in Japan with OMF for nearly 25 years and currently serves with the Field Leadership Team.
- Gerard & Sarah Charles – served for 10 years among Muslims in East Asia, and are currently as the OMF Area Reps for North England
- Sarah Melbourne - OMF worker serving children in Taiwan

Venue: Holyrood Evangelical Church, 121 Montgomery St, Edinburgh

Hot and cold drinks will be provided. Please bring your own packed lunch.

No booking required. No charge for entry.

The first hour of this event will be live-streamed.

Request for a car...

Dave Brennan, who spoke at Equip in earlier this year, is coming up to Scotland for the Christmas period. He has asked if anyone has a car that they don't need between 23-27 December? They are a small family with two kids and Dave's insurance automatically covers driving a friend's car. Please contact Liz (Liz@holyroodevangelical.org) if you can help.

Church Calendar

For your prayers and info –

- Monday: Baby and Toddlers at 10am
- Wednesday:
 - Thanksgiving service for Peter Swinson at 12 noon
 - Prayer Meeting on Zoom at 7pm
- Thursday:
 - Men's Discipleship Group at 10.30am in the church
 - Session meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Sunday:
 - Communion Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Joe Barnard preaching. Please contact Liz by 12 noon on Thursday if you would like a socially distant seat.
 - Equip with Lynn Millar at 6pm



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