

Weekly Newsletter: 13th December 2022

Reflection: Christmas Appeal 2022

By Joe Barnard

Our Christmas Appeal is under way and I want to connect the mission of Holyrood with two of the organisations that we are partnering with. Next week I'll say something about the other two.

The Bonar Trust

A YouGov survey completed earlier this year indicated that only 1 in 3 Scots identify as Christian. Of this group, only 28% professed to believe 'that Jesus was a real person who died and came back to life and was the Son of God'. This means that less than 1 in 10 Scots right now can be identified as Christian in any meaningful sense. No wonder we increasingly hear Scotland being described as a mission field.

Where does the re-evangelisation of Scotland begin? In truth, there is no one action to pinpoint. However, vital to the cause is training up as many gospel workers as possible to go out into the villages, towns, and cities of Scotland in order to plant new churches, revitalise old ones, and to engage in other forms of pioneering mission work.

The mission of the Bonar Trust is to help support and train up gospel workers so that men and women will be prepared for the ministry needs of today's church. The trust has already had a significant impact in terms of opening up a bigger pipeline of ministry trainees. Yet, the true importance of the trust is not only that it is increasing the number of workers, but that it is also improving the quality of workers being sent out. You may have noticed a number of high calibre preachers – often still in their mid to late 20s – filling pulpits in recent years. This is no accident. The apprenticeship model supported by the Bonar Trust has helped to make sure that academic seminary education is balanced by practical experience and on the ground training in local churches.

It's a joy and privilege to be able to contribute something this year to the great mission of re-evangelising Scotland.

Our 'Missionary Partners' in North Africa

Revelation 7:9 says,

'After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!''

There are so many wonderful truths jam packed in this verse. However, I want to draw special attention to the simple adjective 'all'. Revelation says that the multitude before the throne will include people of *all* nations. This amazing truth ought to inspire us as we think of countries where people are trapped in the darkness of Islam, secularism, or other false religions. The hope of the gospel is nothing less than that there will be representatives of every tribe, tongue, and nation joining in the great choir of worshippers in the city of God.

Over the last year we have been getting to know a missionary family working in one of the darkest parts of North Africa. We have faithfully been praying for them. This Christmas we have the opportunity to encourage their hearts, not just with prayers, but with a financial gift. Let's think of our gift as a way of sending a smile and a hug across the globe. All of us live on a frontline of evangelism. Yet, some frontlines are more difficult to hold than others. Let's give thanks for the privilege of being able to express love and support to a family who are pouring themselves out as a drink offering on behalf of a unreached people group.

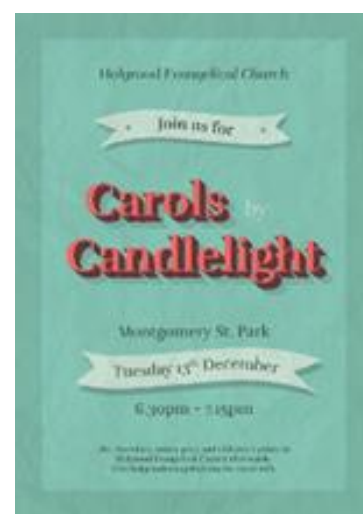
If you would like to contribute to the Christmas Appeal, you can do this by bank transfer or cheque in the offering box. Please mark your gift as 'Christmas Appeal'. Thank you!

Christmas Calendar 2022

Here's a list of what's happening in December –

- **Carols by Candlelight in Montgomery Street Park, tonight at 6:30-7:15pm.** Wrap up warm and come along to sing carols in the park with the Salvation Army Band followed by hot chocolate and mince pies in the church.
- Carol Service, December 18th at 6:00pm
- Christmas Day Family Service, December 25th at 10:30am

Note: there will be no evening service or home group meetings on December 25th or January 1st. There will also be no prayer meeting on Wednesday 28th December but we'll have our first prayer meeting of 2023 on Wednesday 4th January.



Lorna Ferguson's Visit

Lorna arrives in Edinburgh tomorrow lunchtime and will join us in Holyrood this Sunday and over the weekend of 28th and 29th January. Please pray for Lorna and two of her sons as they travel to the UK and for her time in Scotland to be a blessing.

Prayer Meeting with Isaac Shaw – Wednesday 22nd February

Save the date! Isaac and Gloria will join us at the prayer meeting on Wednesday 22nd February at 7pm to pray for the work of in North India. We'll meet in person in the church building with tea and coffee beforehand from 6.30pm.

A Thank You from Tearfund

I am pleased to confirm receipt of £3,335.75 from Holyrood Evangelical Church towards the work of Tearfund this harvest time.

Thanks to the generosity of churches like yours, our local partners are able to reach people, like Jaman, around the world with tools and training to help them break free from poverty. In Nepal, they are investing in communities affected by the climate crisis, equipping people with the skills they need to train as farmers and earn an income.



In the long-term, this means that families can become self-sufficient again. Villages will be returned to thriving communities, with families being able to stay together, reach their full potential and flourish.

‘After getting that [training], I am happy,’ shares Jaman. ‘I am not going anywhere else now... No matter what, I am determined to do this.’ Jaman has his confidence back, is happy with his new skills and is excited to lift his family out of poverty.

Thank you for choosing to show God’s love to those in need this Harvest season. We are very grateful for your partnership in our ministry as we seek to bring God’s transforming love to those living in poverty around the world so that communities can be restored and flourish. Please continue to pray with us for families like Jaman’s – that they will get the opportunities and training they need to break free from poverty and thrive.

Every blessing, Diana (Tearfund Scotland)

Church Calendar

For your prayers and info –

- Monday: Baby and Toddler Group at 10am;
- Tuesday: Carols by Candlelight in Montgomery Street Park, 6.30pm – 7.15pm
- Wednesday: Prayer Meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Friday: Youth Film Night at 6.30pm at the Scott’s
- Sunday:
 - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Joe Barnard preaching.
 - Carol Service at 6pm



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