

## Weekly Newsletter: 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023

### Reflection: The Roadmap of Equip in 2023

By Joe Barnard

Communication and group moral are connected. It can be discouraging to be out on a long and tiring journey without a sense of where a group is going. If we are honest, church can often feel this way. The pastor may have a sense of direction in terms of preaching and discipleship, but from the point of view of those in the pews, each week feels like another step in the wilderness. One of the great difficulties of church leadership is achieving a shared sense of direction and pacing within a congregation.

Yet, my hope is for us at Holyrood to overcome these challenges. We want the whole of the congregation to feel as if we are walking together in a purposeful direction. In line with this objective, my aim here is to communicate the vision and plan for our Equip meetings in 2023.

#### The Vision of Equip

Learning well and teaching well are not the same things. It's one thing to sit down and dutifully listen to someone give a lecture from the front of a room; it's something else to engage actively in the process of learning. The vision of Equip is to find ways to move beyond passive listening and to push learners into the space of engagement, discussion, and reflection. At Equip, we want to communicate truth, but we also want to build competence. If Sunday morning is about worship, Equip is about training.

I am going to continue to think about how to create an effective learning environment for Equip. Don't be surprised if at times there are tables and pencils when you walk in the room. Also, don't be surprised if there are moments when I have you form circles of chairs for discussion. A little exertion goes a long way in terms of retention. If we want to be transformed by the Word of God, we need to be willing to step outside of our comfort zones and to reposition the spectator's chair into a seat of active learning.

#### The Plan for Equip in 2023

*Term 1: January-March – Growing in Communion with God*

One of the great privileges of the Christian life is to grow in intimacy and communion with God. Such intimacy is defined not just by a knowledge of God in general, but a knowledge of Him according to each person of the Trinity. To know how to relate to the Father as Father, the Son as Son, and the Spirit as Spirit is something more than the benchmark of a high theological IQ. Such knowledge is an ocean of joy in which we bathe in the fullness of divine love.

Jan 15<sup>th</sup> – communion with the Father

Feb 5<sup>th</sup> – communion with Jesus  
Feb 19<sup>th</sup> – communion with Jesus  
Mar 5<sup>th</sup> – communion with Jesus  
Mar 19<sup>th</sup> – communion with the Holy Spirit

*Term 2: April-June – Falling in Love with Leviticus*

I'm going to say it. I'm going to admit the truth. I love Leviticus. This is not because I have a fetish for dietary laws or a strange interest in blood rituals. It's because there is no way to marvel at holiness, to understand atonement, to meditate on Christ as High Priest, or to understand the priestly calling of the church without sitting in the classroom of Leviticus. In many ways, Leviticus is like the tabernacle of Israel in the wilderness. If you break down the tabernacle into its various pieces – unassembled rods, curtains, clasps, and bolts – there is not much to look at. But when you step back and see the whole thing assembled together, the majesty of God shines forth.

Seeing such glory will be the goal of our Equip sessions. Our aim will not just be to fall in love with Leviticus as a book, but much more importantly, to fall in love with the God who reveals himself in and through the nitty – and sometimes gritty – details of Leviticus.

April 2nd – Holiness	May 21st – Priesthood
April 16th – Tabernacle	June 4th – Ethics
May 7th – Sacrifice	June 18th – Time

*Term 3: August – The Remarkable Story of the Moravians*

One of my goals in 2023 is to raise the thermostat of devotion at Holyrood. A common way of doing this is by telling stories of heroic individuals. John Piper, for example, used to have an annual conference at Bethlehem Baptist featuring the story of an inspirational Christian like Hudson Taylor or Martin Luther.

I want us to do something similar, but different. Rather than feature a heroic individual of faith, I want to feature a heroic community of faith. I want us to get a collective picture of what it looks like for a group of people to be bound together in holy devotion. The focus of our study in August will be Count Zinzendorf and the remarkable community at Herrnhut in the 18th C.

*Term 4: September-December – The Beatitudes*

We have a king. This king sat down and gave a blueprint of his kingdom to his followers. Each Christian needs regularly to meditate on the Sermon of the Mount. The sermon is not an impossible ideal, but a glorious vocation. Together we need to be growing in the character and practices that are the core of what it means to be a disciple of Christ. Thus, we'll take eight weeks to look in detail at the Beatitudes.

Sept 3rd – poor in spirit	Nov 5th – merciful
Sept 17th – mourn	Nov 19th – pure in heart
Oct 1st – meek	Dec 3rd – peacemakers
Oct 15th – hunger and thirst	

So here is the road map for Equip in 2023. Now that we have a shared sense of direction, let's pray for a shared sense of enthusiasm- a willingness to walk together along a path that will lead each one of us closer to communion with God and fellowship with one another.

## Prayer Meetings – 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> January

We're looking forward to having some of the Navigators Team with us this week on Zoom to share about their work in Edinburgh. Please contact Liz (Liz@holyroodevangelical.org) if you would like Zoom codes and don't already receive them.

The prayer meeting next week (18<sup>th</sup>) will be in person in the church building at 7pm. This is to allow the door and youth teams to take part in fire safety training after the prayer meeting at 8pm. Hard copies of the prayer bulletin will be available for the prayer meeting.

## Book Group – Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> January

A reminder that book group this month is on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> January and that we are reading Glen Scrivener's book *The Air We Breathe*. Further information from Anncris ([anncris@gmail.com](mailto:anncris@gmail.com)).

## Warm Space

By Bill Wright



Monday was the first session of our 'Warm Space' events, and with limited publicity it proved to be both exciting and very encouraging.

During 12.30 and 4.00pm we had 14 adults, 2 children, 1 dog and 1 cat that ventured into our space for a hot drink, biscuit and company. We

hope that members of our fellowship might also take this opportunity to save on their power and join us for a hot cuppa.

Please pray for this 12 week mission in our community and that we might be blessed with more people coming through our doors (Jeremiah 29:7).

## Christmas Appeal

Just a reminder that this is the last week for our Christmas Appeal. The four projects that we are supporting this year are – The Bonar Trust, our missionary partners in North Africa, Queensland Theological College and the European Mission Fellowship. Thank you!

## Ladies Breakfast – Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> January



We're looking forward to our next Ladies' Breakfast on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> January from 9.30am until 11am.

Lorna Ferguson will be our speaker. Please join us for a time of fellowship, teaching and prayer (as well as having our breakfast together!)

Look out for a google form this week to help us with catering.

Any questions, please contact Liz ([Liz@holyroodevangelical.org](mailto:Liz@holyroodevangelical.org))

## Church Calendar

For your prayers and info –

- Monday:
  - Baby & Toddlers Group from 10 - 11.30am
  - Warm Space from 12.30 – 4pm
- Wednesday: Prayer Meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Thursday: Session Meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Sunday:
  - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Joe Barnard preaching.
  - Equip at 6pm



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