

## Weekly Newsletter: 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023

### Reflection: Giving thanks

By Lorna Ferguson

*"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now..." Philippians 1:3-5*

I am enjoying my two months in Scotland, catching up with friends, family and supporters, worshipping God in English and eating yummy things that I can't get in Japan. Although this time back is not an official Home Assignment (which is usually longer) it serves some of the same purposes.

One of those purposes is to be able to thank churches and individuals for all the support they give, and give an update of how God is answering their prayers. The Apostle Paul often started off his letters to churches with words of thanks, thanking God for the people in the different churches and for the various things they were doing. I have to confess that I am very bad at writing letters, or even emails, of thanks. In fact I am pretty bad at keeping up with personal correspondence generally.

When David and I first became missionaries, we divided up the various things we had to do. I took on the accounting, doing our budgets and keeping track of expenditure, and David took on personal correspondence, including writing letters of thanks. In many missionary families it is often the other way round - the husband does tasks like the finances and the wife keeps in touch with people personally. In fact there were several occasions when people would come up to me on Home Assignment and thank me for my card or email, not realising it was David who written it. David was also the one who wrote all our prayer letters and any entries for church magazines. Although I have managed to keep up with those better, I have to say that I am woefully inadequate at keeping up with personal correspondence. So one of the highlights for me being back in Scotland is having the opportunity to thank people face to face for their faithful prayers and support.

When Paul wrote to the Philippians, he said that he thanked God every time he remembered them. And he prayed for them with joy because of their partnership in the gospel from the first day right up to the time when he was writing. He also thanked them later in the letter for their financial gift (Phil 4:18).

The phrase "partnership in the gospel" has always been a special one for me. The original Greek for partnership is *koinwnia* (koinonia). In other places this is translated as fellowship. It has a sense of sharing in something, or participating in something together. When people work in partnership, they can do things

that they would not be able to do on their own, and they are also able to do more than one person on their own could.

For me this is a core part of my relationship with Holyrood and other supporting churches and individuals. We have a partnership in the gospel. I could not do what I do in Japan without the prayers and support of folks back in Scotland. Your partnership is literally essential for my work there. And so I thank God every time I remember you, and always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel.

In his book, *Basics for Believers: An Exposition of Philippians*, Don Carson writes about the believers at Philippi: “They continued their witness in Philippi, they persevered in their prayers for Paul, they sent money to support him in his ministry – all testifying to their shared vision of the importance and priority of the gospel. That is more than enough reason for thanking God.”

In the same way, as you continue your witness in Scotland, and persevere in your prayers for Japan and give financial support, so we are all testifying to that shared vision of the importance and priority of the gospel. And what better fellowship can there be.

I hope that in my weekend at Holyrood from the 28-29<sup>th</sup> of this month, I will have the opportunity to thank many of you face to face. But even if not, please know how thankful I am to God for all of you and for that special partnership from “the first day”, 25 years ago, until now.

## Prayer Meetings – this Wednesday

For this week only, there are two options for the prayer meeting on Wednesday. One option is to meet in the church at 7pm to have an in person prayer meeting (fire safety training will take place for the welcome, creche and Sunday Club teams afterwards at 8pm). Hard copies of the prayer bulletin will be available. There is also the option to meet on Zoom, as usual, at 7pm and codes will be sent out on Wednesday morning. Please join whichever group works best for you.

We will be back together as normal on Zoom next week (25<sup>th</sup> January).

## Warm Space Update

By Bill Wright



Monday 16<sup>th</sup>, was our second Warm Space event and again it was encouraging. We thank everyone for their continuing support and prayers, they really are appreciated.

We were blessed with another successful day, 22 adults, 1 child and 4 dogs came into our Warm Space. Lots of good conversations, one conducted in German with a 60 year old Polish lady who had very limited English. It tested a team members O’Level German, but it was great fun!

## Book Group – this Saturday

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)).

## Christmas Appeal

By Roy Tatton

We give thanks to God for His gracious work amongst us with the Christmas Appeal closing last week at the marvellous total of £14,311.

Reflecting the concern amongst the congregation and the number of suggestions received, half of the appeal will be sent to the **European Mission Fellowship** for their project to provide Bibles, Blankets and Generators for the people of Ukraine.

The remaining half will be split between the **Bonar Trust** and the **Queensland Theological College**.

The **Bonar Trust** was set-up some years ago in Scotland to fund and train Gospel workers for the Church in Scotland. The Trust supports Ministry Apprenticeships and Ministers in Training. Many of the young men preaching for us in recent months will have been supported by the Trust.

The **Queensland Theological College** trains leaders for the church in Queensland and beyond. They have had a tough year because of financial issues in their denomination (the Presbyterian Church of Queensland) and recently had to buy their own building. Further financial support will allow them to pay-off loans and allow the ministry to continue.

We will also forward a gift to the **Missionary Family in North Africa** that we pray for, doing amazingly innovative outreach work in a sensitive situation there. We don't know of any specific items they need, but a monetary gift could be used for family needs or for the project they are working on.

Sincere thanks to all for their generous giving to the Christmas Appeal.

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



We're looking forward to having Lorna Ferguson with us for our next Ladies' Breakfast on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> January. Come along for a time of teaching, fellowship and prayer (as well as breakfast!)

The plan is to eat first at 9.30am and then the programme will begin at 10am. We're looking for an idea of numbers so please let Liz ([Liz@holyroodevangelical.org](mailto:Liz@holyroodevangelical.org)) know if you're coming and haven't already. There is also a hard copy sign up list in the church foyer.

We are planning a 'bring and share' breakfast so please let Liz know if you're happy to bring a contribution. Thank you!

## Raising Kids for Christ in a Confusing World – Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March

We're excited to have Mel Lacy (from Growing Young Disciples) speaking at our parenting conference on **Raising Kids for Christ in a Confusing World** on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March. The conference will run from 9.30am until 3.30pm and is free to attend.

Mel is one of the most helpful voices in the UK in terms of helping parents navigate the difficult waters of identity, technology, sexuality, and the basics of raising children for Christ. It promises to be a great day!

Please contact Liz ([Liz@holyroodevangelical.org](mailto:Liz@holyroodevangelical.org)) to book and anyone is welcome to attend so please pass on the details to family or friends who may be interested.



## 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 in person at the church and on Zoom
  - Fire Safety Training for teams at 8pm at the church
- Saturday: Book Group at 3.30pm
- Sunday:
  - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Joe Barnard preaching.
  - Home Groups



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