

## Weekly Newsletter: 11<sup>th</sup> April 2023

### Reflection: Two Important Updates

By Joe Barnard

Communication is a vital part of gospel community. It's very difficult for a congregation to be a body with coordinated movement and prayer if members are not aware of what is happening in the near future. In this week's reflection I want to let you know about two important events that we all need to be aware of.

#### 1 – HEC is launching a monthly in-person prayer meeting starting in May

There are competing values when it comes to thinking about our weekly prayer meeting. On the one hand, there have been some genuine benefits that have come from moving the meeting to Zoom over the last few years. Some of these are the following: (1) Zoom enables more people to participate; (2) Zoom provides a simple platform for praying in large and small groups; and (3) it's easier for many to hear people on Zoom than in-person. These benefits need to be acknowledged and factored in as we think about how to maintain and strengthen the prayer meeting in the future.

On the other hand, there are also benefits to having prayer meetings in-person. These are the following: (1) there is something special about being in the physical presence of a group of believers in the middle of the week; (2) some people are more willing to attend in-person meetings than digital meetings – especially if their work involves a lot of screentime; and (3) in-person allows for singing together.

In view of these competing values, the session has decided to trial having the prayer meeting in-person once a month. Hopefully, this will allow us to enjoy more of the benefits of meeting in-person without losing the convenience and simplicity of Zoom.

The plan will be to have the in-person meeting on the *1st Wednesday* of each month starting in May. There will not be a Zoom option on these dates. On all other weeks the prayer meeting will be on Zoom as usual. We realise that it might be a little difficult for some people to keep track of what is happening each week. Nevertheless, our hope is that between the newsletter, Sunday morning notices, and social media, we can keep everyone up-to-date.

#### 2 – Neil Longwe will do a six-week placement at HEC this summer

Part of our vision at HEC is to become a training church. We will take a step in that direction this summer when Neil Longwe comes to do a six-week placement with us as part of his final training to become a licensed minister in the Free Church of Scotland. Neil has been a ministry apprentice at Coatbridge Free Church for the last couple of years. He is known for his enthusiasm, winsomeness, and contagious passion



for the gospel. Neil is married to Jillian, and they have two young children, Naomi (3 years old) and Israel (2 years old).

Neil's placement will be from mid-June to mid-August with a break in the middle while he and his family are at Keswick. During his time with us, Neil will be involved in all of the ordinary facets of ministry, ranging from leading services to doing home visitations to meeting individuals for one-to-one discipleship. The family will stay in the manse for part

of July while the Barnards are visiting family in the US.

This placement is a fantastic opportunity for the whole congregation to feel more connected to the wider mission of the evangelical church in Scotland. There is always a danger of individual congregations becoming too fixated on their own local ministries. One of the blessings of hosting a candidate for ministry is that we have our eyes lifted to the many vacant churches throughout rural and urban Scotland which are in desperate need of spiritual leadership. We need to appreciate that, by investing in Neil, we are investing in the needs of the wider church.

Let's be praying that Neil's placement will be a time of mutual encouragement. God willing, Neil will learn something from us that will better prepare him for the challenges of one day leading a congregation. Yet, we should also be hoping and praying that we learn something from him – that by the time Neil leaves us we are reinvigorated in our calling to do whatever we can to help rebuild and strengthen the church in Scotland.

## Update on Kathleen Forsyth

Kathleen is currently in ERI and being well looked after. She has a mild dose of Covid so please do not visit. Kathleen is very grateful for all our expressions of love and prayers. Contact Liz ([Liz@holyroodevangelical.org](mailto:Liz@holyroodevangelical.org)) for further information.

## Men's Discipleship Groups

The men's discipleship groups are meeting this Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> April (7.30am in Starbucks on Lothian Road or 10.30am in the church). Contact Joe ([joecbarnard@gmail.com](mailto:joecbarnard@gmail.com)) for more details.

## Annual General Meeting and Gift Aid

The AGM of the church will take place a week on Wednesday (19<sup>th</sup> April) on Zoom at 7pm. Please contact Liz ([Liz@holyroodevangelical.org](mailto:Liz@holyroodevangelical.org)) if you would like the Zoom codes and don't already receive them.

The finance team at Holyrood would like to thank everyone for their generous giving over the last year.

If you give to the church under the gift aid scheme and require a note of your total giving during the 2022-2023 financial tax year, often needed for annual tax returns, then please speak to Nick Archer and this information will be provided. Thank you!

## Women's Bible Study

We're planning to start a Women's Bible Study in the church at 10.30am on Thursday mornings from Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April. It will run for 6 weeks (until the end of May). Norma Shippin will lead the study. Please come along if you're free and contact Liz ([Liz@holyroodevangelical.org](mailto:Liz@holyroodevangelical.org)) for more information.

## Book Group

This month's book group meets on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April at 3.30pm. We are reading *Ten women who overcame their past* by Dayspring Macleod. For further information please contact Anncriis ([anncris@gmail.com](mailto:anncris@gmail.com))

## Ladies' Afternoon Tea

Save the date! Instead of a Ladies' Breakfast, this term we're planning a Ladies' Afternoon Tea on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June from 2-4pm. Dayspring Macleod will be our speaker on the topic 'Resting in the Lord'. We're looking forward to drawing all the women in the church family together for a time of fellowship, teaching, testimonies as well as enjoying tea!

## Christian Fellowship Walking Group

Many of us enjoyed hill walks (and coffee shops) with Anna Murray over a number of years. Calum MacKellar has taken over organising walks on the third Saturday of each month from April to July.



The first walk will be on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2023 and will be a walk around Gladhouse Reservoir. It is 5 miles on nearly flat ground and will take about 3 hours.

Meet at 10am in the car park in front of the Bingo Hall at the Meadowbank Shopping Centre, 8 Moray Park Terrace, EH7 5TN. For those coming directly: Meet in car park on Gladhouse Reservoir at 10.45am

Please bring a packed lunch and feel free to invite friends who might be interested. Contact Calum ([cmackellar@yahoo.com](mailto:cmackellar@yahoo.com)) for further information or to be added onto the email distribution list for the walks.

## Farne Churches Youth and Family Outreach

By Maureen Gowans

Last week a new youth worker, Jane, was appointed. She has a provisional start date of 5<sup>th</sup> June. Thank you for all your prayers over a long, and at times difficult, recruitment process. Pray for Jane as she prepares and for the volunteer who have kept activities going over the time of vacancy.

## Church Calendar

For your prayers and info –

- Monday: Warm Space from 12.30 – 4pm
- Wednesday: Prayer Meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Thursday
  - Men's Discipleship 7.30am at Starbucks on Lothian Road or 10.30am in the church
  - Session Meeting 7pm in person
- Sunday:
  - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Joe Barnard preaching.
  - Equip at 6pm (and live streamed)



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