

Weekly Newsletter: 16th May 2023

Reflection: Building a Culture of Discipleship

By Joe Barnard

Our mission at Holyrood is to be a disciple-making community. It's worth taking a moment to think about the meaning of this statement. The statement exposes two common errors in how a lot of people think about discipleship.

First, disciple-making is often thought to be a solitary activity. We often imagine that discipleship is something that happens primarily in a one-to-one environment. A lot of discipleship material is written this way. There is no shortage of Bible studies that picture the ideal setting for discipleship being two people who meet to chat over coffee. Without at all disparaging the usefulness of such methods, we need to recognise that one-to-one discipleship is a secondary, not primary, form of helping another person grow in faith. Rarely in the New Testament do we see discipleship taking place in groups of two. In most cases, the context of spiritual learning is a small community. There is good reason for this. Human beings are social animals. A lot of the disciplines, virtues, and blessings of the Christian life require a community to practice and experience. Gathered worship is a good example of this. There is no way to replicate a corporate act of worship in a one-to-one setting. A prayer meeting provides another example. We learn about prayer differently from listening to the prayers of a group of people than we do from reading a book or praying alone.

A second error is thinking that disciple-making is the responsibility of a select group of professionals or specially gifted individuals. In truth, all of us have a part to play in helping to nurture the beliefs and practices of other believers. A key part of such "communication" occurs through culture. We often hear that "more is caught than taught". The statement is a platitude because it is true. A new believer will learn a lot more about what it means to follow Jesus by being placed in a healthy environment of discipleship than he or she will learn from merely reading books or sitting down for a "formal" session over coffee. The best way to learn about Christian hospitality is by experiencing hospitality in the homes of other Christians. The best way to grow in prayer is by being planted among Christians who live as if prayer is nothing less than the breath of life.

It's important to grasp the significance of this point. *To be a disciple-making community does not mean that each member of HEC will be arranging "one-to-one" meetings with other people in the church. Rather, to be a disciple-making community means two things: first, to participate in the essential discipleship life of the community and, second, to encourage new people to move toward the centre of the same communal life.*

Moving People to the Right

There is a phrase that I want every member of HEC to know and understand: “moving people to the right.” At Holyrood, we are blessed with a strong shared life of discipleship. This life is defined by four core practices, namely, Sunday morning worship, home groups, the prayer meeting, and Equip. Those of us that participate in all four of these practices have a healthy diet of word, prayer, and fellowship.

And, yet, at Holyrood, we also have a problem. A lot of our new people are not moving beyond attendance on Sunday mornings. This is not good for them or for us. We will never be able to fulfil the Great Commission of raising up mature disciples unless we are able to draw new people into the broader spiritual culture of our community. Sunday morning, by itself, is a subsistence ration for the week. If we want new people to grow in the wisdom and character needed to be light in the midst of darkness, they will need more than a nice welcome, a weekly sermon, and a warm cup of coffee.

Now, how will we overcome this problem? The only solution is for each member to take on the challenge of “moving people to the right.” We all need to be nudging new people to move from the periphery of our community (i.e. Sunday morning attendance) toward the centre of our common life.

Such progression is what we mean by “moving people to the right.” It’s important to know that there is a hierarchy of practices at Holyrood. Of first importance is Sunday morning; second is being involved in home groups; third is the prayer meeting; and fourth is Equip. Our vision as a church needs to be one of seeing people shift from mere Sunday attendance to being fully embedded in the culture of our congregation. No doubt, someone will be thinking, “But what does this look like in practice?” The answer to this question is simple. We all need to look for opportunities to chat winsomely to others about things like home groups and the prayer meeting. Rarely does a person show up to a new meeting uninvited. Most people have a fear of the unknown. Do we want new people to come to our prayer meeting? If so, we need to talk to them about how the prayer meeting could be a blessing to their lives? Do we want to see new faces in our home groups? We need to share testimonies of the difference home group involvement can make in the midst of trials and spiritual difficulties.

Such is the work of “moving people to the right” and – more importantly – of being a disciple-making community.

A Tribute to Maureen Gowans

By Ernie and Norma Shippin



As a church family we are mourning the passing of our dear sister and friend Maureen Gowans who went to be with the Lord in the early hours of Wednesday 10th May. How we will miss her – she impacted our lives in so many ways. She had a servant heart, a ferocious intelligence, an abounding kindness and grace, a perception that noticed people in need, a wicked sense of humour and most of all a shining love for the Lord Jesus. She was involved with the Holyrood fellowship for her whole life, first as a long-standing and faithful member of Holyrood Abbey and latterly as an enthusiastic member of Holyrood Evangelical.

Maureen became a Christian at a young age. Her life was characterised by selfless love and joy. She was always interested in others, especially those who were vulnerable or needy. Many can testify to her unstinting care and encouragement.

Maureen qualified as a doctor and spent her career as a much-loved and respected GP, who combined high standards with a huge emphasis on empathy with, and sacrificial care for, all of her patients. She seemed always to be active - busy spending time with friends walking or as an enthusiastic member of a bird-watching club where she made many friends.

She was young at heart and regularly helped serve at the Baby and Toddler group. She had a long involvement with young people via Joppa Crusaders, supporting Jim Aitken and James Stewart in ministering to underprivileged young lads, whose progress she followed with prayerful interest for many decades. She longed to see the next generation come to know and love the Lord as she herself did.

Maureen was always eager to serve the Lord. As well as being dependably faithful in attendance at services of worship and the prayer meeting, Maureen served the church in various ways. To mention a few, she was on the parish outreach team and served on the congregational board. She was part of the team which led a Life Explored group; she helped plan and run the annual Doors Open Day. In recent years Maureen was a valued member of the pastoral care team and a keen member of one of the "warm space" teams, using her people skills to speak to strangers, some of them very needy. She was ever cheerful and always faithful in seeking to be of service to others.

In her retirement she travelled to Malawi and quietly pioneered a palliative care service for that nation. Maureen also accompanied Jim on a couple of his visits showing great love to four orphans he was supporting, sending gifts of clothing every year. She took to heart some of the other women and children there and sought to support them both whilst in Malawi and from the UK.

Maureen loved to go on holiday to North Northumberland and in recent years became a trustee of the Youth and Family Outreach, a charity run by a group of the Farne Churches. She encouraged us to partner with them in prayer and helped raise funds for the Youth and Family Worker post. She was thrilled that last month they were able to appoint a new worker to start in June.

We thank God for her life, love and faith, and for the assurance that she has now entered that place wherein 'His servants will worship Him forever and they will see His face', Rev 22.3-4. Maureen may have been small in stature but she was a giant in every other way.

Maureen's funeral will take place at 1pm on Wednesday 24th May at Warriston Crematorium, EH7 4HW and afterwards everyone is invited to the church for a time of fellowship and light refreshments.

Litter Pick with Friends of Montgomery Street Park

Our next litter pick up will take place this Sunday after the morning service with the Friends of Montgomery Street Park. Meet over in the park from 12 noon until 1pm (but don't feel that you have to stay for long). All the equipment will be provided and the church will be providing hot drinks and biscuits.

Book Group – Saturday 27th May

This month's book group meeting is on 27th May at 3.30pm and we are reading *The hole in our holiness* by Kevin DeYoung. If you would like further information please speak to Anncris (anncris@gmail.com).

Ladies' Afternoon Tea and Women's Ministry



We're really looking forward to getting together as women to hear from God's word, pray, share testimonies, have time to catch up and enjoy afternoon tea together on **Saturday 3rd June from 2 – 4pm** in the church. Dayspring Macleod (pictured) will be our speaker on the topic of 'Resting in the Lord'.

To help us with catering, please can you sign up [here](#). There will also be a hard copy sign up sheet at the church door on Sundays. We don't need contributions of food from everyone, so just bring yourself!

A group of women in the church have started to meeting to think through how we do ministry amongst women and to plan events, like the afternoon tea! The group consists of – Aileen Malaczynska, Alison Nelson, Anna Barnard, Anncri Roberts, Gillian Pickering, Liz Scott and Norma Shippin.

If you have any thoughts about what we can do or feedback, please contact Anncri (anncris@gmail.com) or speak to a member of the group.

Christian Fellowship Walking Group

This Saturday the Walking Group are meeting to walk around Glendevon Reservoirs (8.5km / 5.25 miles easy walk but sometimes uphill) <https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/perthshire/frandy-reservoirs.shtml>. Meet at 10am at Ingleston Park and Ride, Newbridge or for those coming directly, meet at 11am in car park at the start of the Hydro-road Glen Devon. Please bring a packed lunch with you and let Calum know cmackellar@yahoo.com if you are coming.

Church Calendar

For your prayers and info –

- Monday:
 - Baby and Toddler Group from 10am – 11.30am
 - Warm Space from 12.30pm- 4pm
 - Youth Discipleship Team meeting at 7.30pm on Zoom
- Wednesday: Prayer Meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Thursday:
 - Women's Bible Study at 10.30am in the church
 - Session meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Sunday:
 - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Joe Barnard preaching.
 - Equip – Falling in Love with Leviticus at 6pm (and live streamed)



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