

Weekly Newsletter: 27th June 2023

Reflection: Neil Longwe's Testimony

We're delighted to have Neil and the family serving alongside us this summer. Here Neil shares his testimony with us.

We left Malawi when I was five years old, under difficult circumstances and landed on the doorstep of my British grandparents with only the clothes on our backs. Raised in a small rural mining village in Lanarkshire, we were the first black kids that many of the villagers had ever met. It was certainly a culture shock for both parties. I am the eldest of three brothers; my mum was a Scottish missionary and dad was a Malawian church minister. Despite my parents' split, we were blessed to be raised in a Christian home as we were taught to fear God and we saw God provide for us through Christian people, generosity of strangers and provision of a home from the Government. God is good, all the time; and all the time, God is good! That is true but sadly at the age of ten, my dad died, and I started to doubt that truth. Between the ages of five to ten, I thought our family would one day be reconciled; this dream died the day my dad did, leading to a rebellious period of my life where I rejected God and pursued the ways of the world.

Thankfully, the turning point came when I was fifteen years old. I was introduced to the story of Nicky Cruz; a former gangster who became a Christian evangelist. I discovered that I was putting my hopes, dreams, and identity in the wrong things. Soon after, I attended a David Wilkerson rally in Perth where I professed faith in the Lord Jesus. I became a member of Kirkmuirhill Parish Church in 2005.

During my university years, I did seek to live as a disciple of Jesus. However, there were also times I struggled being the only Christian among my peers. God in his mercy gave me Christian friends in a local church house group, this group played an essential part in my Christian formation. Following university, I had a serious bout of depression. I sought help in a Christian recovery programme called Celebrate Recovery. It was during this programme I came to terms with some unresolved issues such as forgiving my late father and the importance of progressive sanctification – and the disciplines of mortification and vivification in the Christian life. Indeed, one major breakthrough in my walk with the Lord was learning that repentance is a not a one-off act but a daily habit.

After coming through my depression, I had a deep sense of a call from God. Psalm 51: 12-15 was heavily impressed upon my heart. However, part of me was unsure whether I should act on it. I put it off and felt the need to grow as a young Christian and gain more life experience. This life experience came in the form



of God providing me an opportunity to go back to Malawi for two months, where I was reunited with family. Shortly after my return to Scotland, the Lord provided me with my first graduate job as a Building Surveyor in Glasgow.

In 2017, I married Jillian Davidson. She is the godliest person I know and one of the most passionate disciples of Jesus Christ. Her love and enthusiasm for the Lord are infectious and together we seek to spur one another on to serve the Lord. In 2019, we were delighted to welcome baby Naomi into our family. During the Covid lockdown period, with a fifteen-month-old and a baby on the way, I began my Minister in Training programme at Edinburgh Theological Seminary/Hope Church, Coatbridge. Israel James came along in February 2021 and has kept us on our toes ever since. We are looking forward to discovering what the Lord has in store for us as we seek to serve Him as the Longwe family.

Update on the Mission Team

Robert Nelson and Robin Clark have recently stepped down from the Mission Team after serving faithfully for many years. All of us no doubt are very grateful for the many ways in which both of them have helped the congregation care for our missionaries as well as do local mission work together.

In terms of future leadership of the team, Gillian Pickering and Joe will be co-leading the Mission Team together. The hope is to continue to use the team to help the congregation be involved in mission work both overseas and here in Edinburgh. The current members of the team are Gillian, Joe, Bill Wright, Susan Holloway, and Shona MacDonald.

Pickleball and Table Tennis – this Tuesday

The church will be open on Tuesday evenings at 7pm for anyone wanting to play pickleball and/ or table tennis. Everyone is welcome and if you've never tried pickleball, come along and have a go at one of the world's fastest growing sports! Contact Andy Scott or Alasdair Roberts (the ping pong pro) for more details.

Book Group – this Saturday

The book group this month will be discussing We need to talk about race by Ben Lindsay. Hazel Sorsamo will be leading the discussion and so the meeting will be on Zoom rather than in person. Please note that the meeting will be on 1 July. For more details speak to Anncris (anncris@gmail.com).



Faith Mission Convention 2023



SUNDAY 2 – FRIDAY 7 JULY
Bible Readings
Monday–Friday at 10.30am
Speaker: Paul Mallard
Evening Celebrations
Sunday at 8.15pm
Monday–Friday at 7.30pm
Speaker: Charles Price
Seminars • Monday–Friday at 12.00noon
Rejuvenate (16.29) • Sunday–Friday at 9.00pm
Kids' Zone (5.12) • during weekday meetings
Creche (0-4) • during weekday morning meetings
THE FAITH MISSION BIBLE COLLEGE
548 Gilmerton Road, Edinburgh EH17 8QG

The Convention runs from Sunday 2nd until Friday 7th July at the Faith Mission on Gilmerton Road. Paul Mallard will be doing the Bible Readings at 10.30am and Charles Price will be speaking at the Evening Celebrations (8.15pm on Sunday and 7.30pm Monday to Friday). There are also seminars and activities for children and young people. For more details go [here](#).

Summer Appeal 2023

The summer appeal is open for 2023 and will go towards the support of our three missionaries.



The Sorsamo Family in Finland



Lorna Ferguson in
Japan



James Stewart in
Singapore

Cheques (made payable to Holyrood Evangelical Church) and cash in an envelope marked 'Summer Appeal' can be placed in the offering box or given to Nick Archer. Or you can contribute by using the bank details on holyroodevangelical.org (use reference 'Summer Appeal'). Thank you!

Plans for the summer

Joe and the family are away in the US from Tuesday 27th June until Wednesday 26th July.

Neil will be on holiday on 16th and 23rd July and we're looking forward to Bob taking our morning services. The prayer meetings will continue on Wednesday evenings as normal at 7pm on Zoom and in person on 5th July.

Here are the plans for our Sunday services:

Date	Morning service	Evening Gathering
2 nd July	Neil Longwe	Neil Longwe
9 th July	Neil Longwe	Neil Longwe
16 th July	Bob Akroyd	No service
23 rd July	Bob Akroyd	No service

There will be no communion during our morning service on 2nd July.

For any pastoral matters when Joe is away, please speak to Neil, an elder or a member of the Pastoral Care Team (Alison Nelson, Alasdair Roberts, Elaine Harley or Liz Scott).

Liz will be on holiday from Monday 10th July until Monday 24th July. **There will be no newsletter or prayer bulletin for these two weeks.** Service will resume as normal from Monday 24th 😊

Church Calendar

For your prayers and info –

- Tuesday: Pickleball and Table Tennis at 7pm
- Wednesday: Prayer Meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Saturday: Book Group at 3.30pm on Zoom
- Sunday:
 - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Neil Longwe preaching.
 - Equip at 6pm (and live streamed) led by Neil Longwe.



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