

Weekly Newsletter: 10th October 2023

Reflection: Accelerating the Missional Impact of the Church

By Joe Barnard

What's our shared vision for the future of Holyrood Evangelical Church? If the Lord sent an angel to one of our prayer meetings to ask us, "What would you like to contribute to the mission of God in Edinburgh?" how would we reply?

Personally, I don't think the future of Holyrood is identical to the past of Holyrood. Forty years ago, the need in Edinburgh was for preaching stations where people could travel to hear the Word expounded and the gospel preached. There were not many truly evangelical churches. Therefore, committed Christians needed to travel, often a distance, in order to find a faithful teaching ministry. By God's grace, this situation has changed. Edinburgh now has a growing number of dynamic evangelical churches that are both orthodox in their teaching and missional in their culture.

What then is the spiritual need of the city today? My opinion is that the primary need is for evangelical churches like us to return to a more locally-rooted, community-centred ministry. Edinburgh needs churches that target specific areas and diligently work to love, witness, and disciple a limited part of the city. For us, this means the Easter Road/Montgomery Street community. God has planted us in this community by giving us a building there. In a way, this is like a commanding officer telling a small platoon to go and take a particular hill. God has put a pin on the city and indicated to members of HEC that our shared mission is to bring the gospel to the people who live near Easter Road.

This in mind, when I think of an angel showing up at one of our prayer meetings, my hope is that our request would be that God would give the people, gifting, and grace needed to bring gospel transformation to the Easter Road/Montgomery Street area. I imagine a day when our congregation is heaving with the full range of people living around us: students, immigrants, the socially deprived, young professionals, and long-time Edinburgh residents. People are being converted; people are being trained; people are being disciplined; people are being helped; people are being commissioned and sent out. The building is used a lot of the day, *every day* – and not because a handful of sacrificial members are like the titan Atlas shouldering the heavens, but because we have the volunteers, teams, and staff needed to enable each member to do his or her part *and no more*.

How Do We Get There?

In business, people sometimes talk about “vertical accelerators”. These are means of taking incremental growth and boosting it over a short period of time. By investing in the right people, or projects, a somewhat stagnant business can suddenly find itself with a larger share of the market or a wider customer base. Something similar can be true of churches. We can ask, “Where does the Spirit seem to be working among us?” and strategically focus our efforts more on projects that move along the grain of what God is already doing.

This is precisely what we will be doing as a church family in January. Over the last year, God has surprised us by cracking a few doors open in the community through a very simple menu of activities like Warm Space, Pickleball, and Baby and Toddlers. Just by having the building open and the lights on, we’ve seen more students, more internationals, and more unexpected faces visiting our congregation. The questions all of us should be asking are these: How do we take this momentum and accelerate it? Are there ways to lean into the movement of the Spirit so that we can have more contacts and thus more gospel opportunities in the Easter Road area?

Now, as one answer to these questions, the Mission Team has been planning a Mission Week in the new year that will take place January 22nd-28th. The strategy of the week is to take what is already going well and to build on this in the hopes of increasing our impact in the local community. Each day there will be a combination of a Warm Space and a specific event that will target a different group in the community. Events will include a Scottish ceilidh night, an international food night, an afternoon high tea, a quiz night, and a family fun afternoon.

It will be important to understand that this mission week is part of a long-term effort to share the gospel with people in the local community. Therefore, the primary aim of the week will be to build contacts with new people. Although we will be planning a Life Explored Course which will run just after the mission week (and inviting people to this course throughout the week), not every planned activity will have a gospel appeal or message. This is intentional. We believe that it takes time and trust in order to reach people for Christ. The focus of the mission week will be to meet as many people as we can so that, *as we continue to get to know them*, we can show them the love of Christ and, even more importantly, tell them the good news that Jesus is Lord.

Arrangements for Kathleen’s funeral

Kathleen’s funeral will take place on Thursday 12th October at 10am at Mortonhall Crematorium. Phil will be taking the service and light refreshments will be served afterwards at the Braid Hills Hotel.

There will be a livestream of the service [here](#) and the username is xova8740 and password 531701

There will be no Men’s Discipleship Group this Thursday because of the funeral.

Warm Space is back!

Warm Space will be back from 16th October (12 noon until 3pm). Everyone is welcome. Please pray for the teams and for all those who will come into the church as this ministry recommences.

October holidays

Joe and the family will be on holiday from Monday 16th until Monday 23rd October. We're delighted that Jon Gemmell will be taking our morning service on Sunday 22nd October. He'll be preaching on the book of Jude under the title 'Contenders Ready'. Home Groups will meet in the evening.

Liz will be on holiday from Monday 16th until Friday 20th October and there will be no newsletter or prayer bulletin next week. Normal service will resume the following week 😊

There will be no Baby and Toddler Group on Monday 16th because of the school holidays.

Cross Training Ministries Weekend Away



Joe is leading a men's weekend away in Alltnacriche from Friday 27th to Sunday 29th October. Registration has now closed and a number of guys from the church family are going. More details of the plans for the weekend can be found [here](#).

We're delighted that Tim Rawlinson will be preaching in Holyrood on Sunday 29th October.

Church Calendar

For your prayers and info:

- Monday:
 - Baby & Toddler Group from 10am – 11.30am
 - Co-ordination Group at 7pm
- Tuesday:
 - Men's Discipleship at 6.30am on Zoom
 - Pickleball and Table Tennis at 7pm
 - Ladies' Bible Study at 7pm on Zoom
- Wednesday: Prayer Meeting at 7pm with Mike Fernandez (Latin Link) on Zoom
- Thursday: Kathleen's Funeral at 10am at Mortonhall Crematorium
- Friday: Youth Discipleship – The Hudson Taylor Challenge from 1.15 – 2pm on Zoom
- Sunday:
 - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Joe Barnard preaching.
 - Equip at 6pm



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