

## Weekly Newsletter: 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024

### Reflection: Avoiding Burnout in the Christian Life

By Joe Barnard

Brothers and sisters, I want you to be all-in when it comes to the mission of God. I don't want there to be a drop of energy lost that could be used in the service of loving the church and extending the Great Commission. And yet, at the same time, I don't want you to burn out prematurely. I don't want you to forget that a toe is not the whole body and that human beings are finite creatures, not gods. I want you to have the courage to admit your limitations, and I want you to be aware that pride is forever as much of a hindrance to the mission of the church as is slothfulness.

Keeping all of this in view, we need to be asking some questions right now – especially as we head into a full week of mission. They are these: How can we have zeal without burnout? How can we be living sacrifices that actually stay alive on the altar without our inner resources being quenched by overextending ourselves? Burnout is a real problem that needs to be addressed candidly in the church – especially among evangelical Christians. Therefore, my pastoral plea to you is that you take time to reflect on the following five questions over the next two weeks.

#### *1 – Who am I willing to disappoint?*

None of us likes to disappoint anyone. Yet, the truth is, it's impossible to gain and maintain the approval of everyone. We ought to learn from Paul who did not court the thumbs up of anyone other than Jesus. He says to the Corinthians, "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court" (4:3). Paul lived with one audience; we need to do the same.

#### *2 – Where am I willing to fail?*

There are a lot of areas of life where we can fail without any sin being involved. In fact, each of our great Christian heroes failed in significant areas of life. Wesley had a rotten marriage; Tozer was not gifted in pastoral care; Spurgeon neglected his physical health; Adoniram Judson neglected his mental health; C.S. Lewis made poor choices financially; Dawson Trotman lacked emotional intelligence, and the list could be added to indefinitely. The key lesson is this: we are not God, and we cannot do everything perfectly. Each of us needs to ask the question, what am I willing to bomb in life so that I can fulfil what Jesus calls 'the one thing needful'?

#### *3 – What can be left undone without noticeable loss?*

The "free" world we inhabit expects 100 things of us. To be a competent individual who is socially adept requires that we not just work and sleep, but keep up with the news (local, national, and international),

with pop culture, with fitness (of mind and body), with politics, and with countless other things. And then, on top of such secular duties, there are the spiritual ones. To read through the New Testament is to discover a long list of spiritual responsibilities that – while not being the standard by which we are justified – nonetheless are the wisdom by which we live.

How can we cope with such insufferable responsibilities? We need to ask this: “What can be left undone without loss?” For example, try exchanging reading the news for reading large chunks of the Bible for two weeks and see what happens. You might just find that nothing changes in the world and everything changes in your soul.

#### *4 – Do I value non-productive, restorative activity?*

A lot of us have been schooled in the religion of GTD (getting things done). We don't believe that an activity has value unless it is a quantifiable task that moves a project forward or ticks a box as complete. Such addictive productivity is a liability to our physical health as well as our spiritual wellbeing. Sleep, friendship, leisure, and worship – all of these are non-productive activities, and yet they are essential to spiritual health. Man was not made simply to work; he was made, yes, to work, but also to rest, to praise, to befriend, and to delight himself in the joy of restorative leisure.

#### *5 – Am I allowing myself to be loved by others?*

According to Paul, the law of Christ is that we bear one another's burdens. This is basic to discipleship. To neglect this law is to constrict love and act on pride. The “I-can-do-it-myself” attitude has no place in the kingdom of God. Most importantly, Christ himself came into our world in order to carry the weight of our heaviest problems. Yet, we need to be careful not to think that allowing Christ to help us is a solitary exchange that happens between the individual soul and Jesus. The church is set up so that the love of Christ is funnelled through a community of helping hands and loving hearts. This means that one of the chief ways that Jesus strengthens us in the midst of affliction is by placing us among brothers and sisters who can uphold us in the midst of our struggles.

Are you allowing yourself to be loved by other Christians? This is a vital question that each of us must wrestle with. The ward of burnout is filled with people who lived by the ungodly attitude of “I-can-do-it-myself”. Let's not be proud; let's be humble. Let's not refuse people the opportunity to love us; let's be dependent upon Christ by being dependent upon his people.

*For further advice on how to avoid burnout listen to the Equip session from last Sunday. The link is [here](#).*

## **Community Week – Items Needed**

By the Mission Team

In preparation for the Family Fun afternoon during the Community Week, we are looking for some items:

- Scottish Children's story books
- Craft paper/tissue paper
- Brown wool
- Tartan Paper

We have put a box in the front foyer of the church with the label of *Community Week drop off box* for the items to be put in. If you wish any of the items back particularly the books please put your name inside. Thank you!

## Community Week – 22<sup>nd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> January

It's not long until our Community Week! Events are planned for each evening, Warm Space will be on in the afternoons, with a Cream Tea on the Wednesday and a Family Fun afternoon on the Friday.



Flyers with all the details are available in the church foyer. Please take some and give them out to friends and family. Details are also [here](#) on the church website.

Hope Explored will be running in the church for three consecutive weeks from **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January** from 6-7pm. Flyers are also available in the foyer and please be praying about who you could invite along.

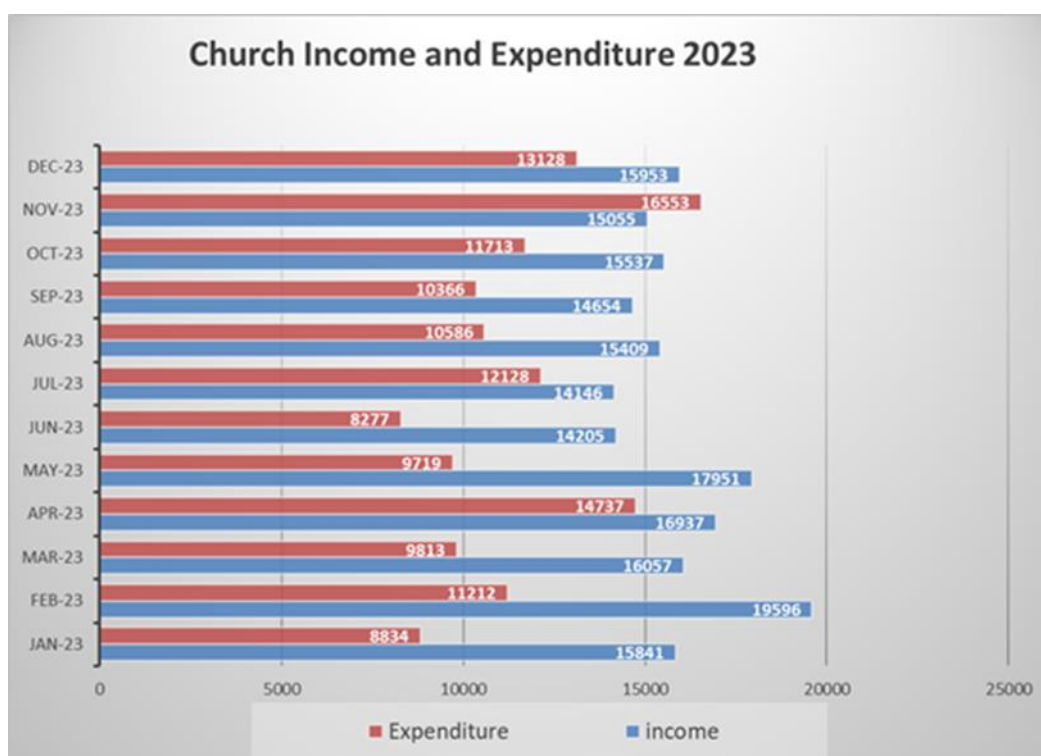
## Christmas Appeal and Finance Update

We give thanks for the contributions towards our Christmas Appeal and the current total is **£13,098**. This is the final week of the appeal which will close on Sunday. A reminder of the four projects we're supporting:

- Scripture Union Scotland
- Tearfund's Middle East emergency appeal
- the Tranent Church Plant (lead by Tim Rawlinson)
- Kilmallie Free Church (for their Minister in Training)

Giving towards the appeal can be made by bank transfer to the church account <https://holyroodevangelical.org/giving/> (using the reference 'Christmas Appeal') or can be placed in an envelope marked 'Christmas Appeal' in the offering box. Thank you!

Nick and the Finance Team have provided the following details about our income and expenditure for 2023.



## Belated Christmas Greetings from SU Hungary

From Hungary, from Budapest (and from our hearts) we would like to wish you all a real celebration of the coming of our Saviour. May He find us all doing His work when He return. Thank you for your kind support, your encouragement and prayers. God bless you all. With love Tamas and the SU Hungary Team.

## Cornhill Book in a Day – 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> January

Come and spend two days at Cornhill in Glasgow digging deep into the book of Psalms with **James Hely Hutchinson**. James is the Director of Institut Biblique de Bruxelles (IBB), in Belgium who has studied, taught and written extensively on the book of Psalms. The day will be a great opportunity to learn key Bible handling skills and to grow in your understanding of the book of Psalms whilst enjoying warm fellowship with like-minded brothers and sisters. Please contact Liz ([Liz@holyroodevangelical.org](mailto:Liz@holyroodevangelical.org)) if you would like to attend so that we can book together as group.

## Book Group – Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February

The next Book Group will be on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February at 9 Craigentenny Avenue at 3.30pm. Note the change of date due to the Community Week events. This time we are reading *Bouncing Forwards* by Patrick Regan. If you have any questions, please contact Anncris.

## SASRA Publications

SASRA have decided to publish the Prayer Bulletin and Ready Magazine online only. They can be found at [sasra.org.uk](http://sasra.org.uk) Norma C will get paper copies of the Prayer Bulletin to those with no access to the internet.

## Church Calendar

For your prayers and info:

- Monday:
  - Baby and Toddler Group from 10 – 11.30am
  - Warm Space from 12noon – 3pm
- Tuesday: Pickleball and Table Tennis at 7pm in the church
- Wednesday: Prayer Meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Thursday: Session Meeting in person at 7pm
- Sunday:
  - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Joe Barnard preaching.
  - Home Groups



[www.holyroodevangelical.org](http://www.holyroodevangelical.org)

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