



Weekly Newsletter: 23rd January 2024

Reflection: A Prayer Itinerary for Community Week

By Joe Barnard

People are still asking how they can be involved during Community Week. More than anything else, let's be praying together for the area around the church building. To help you do this, I want to take you on an imaginative prayer walk. This is a prayer itinerary that you can use repeatedly through the week. It will enable you to focus your prayers on the people who, by God's grace, will one day be joining us for fellowship, discipleship, and worship.

Stop 1: HEC

Picture yourself in the building on a Sunday morning. Think of the diversity of people within the congregation – the elderly, the students, the internationals, the families. Pray for specific people as specific faces come to mind.

Stop 2: Easter Road Post Office

Picture yourself now standing on Easter Road. You are looking at all of the shops: the hairdressers, the pubs, the chic coffee shops, the interesting small businesses. See the faces of particular people: a young professional, a couple pushing a pram, the sad eyes and sunken cheeks of addiction, someone sitting on a blanket asking for money, someone covered with piercings and tattoos. Pray for all these people. See the image of God within them. Believe that no one is outside the reach of grace.

Stop 3: The Mustard Seed

Now, we walk into the Mustard Seed at St. Margarets. In the back of the church is a café serving breakfast to a crowd of people, most of whom are clearly under-resourced. Pray for the staff, the volunteers, and those sitting at tables.

Stop 4: Hibs Football Stadium

We can't be in a community without knowing the community. The most significant religious site near Easter Road is not a church, but a stadium. Picture the streets before a match, especially the young men who are trying to satisfy their need for significance through the community and camaraderie of football. Pray that such men could see that there is more life, joy, and friendship in a church building than in a football stadium. Think of the vision of Isaiah 2 where the crowds are flocking, not to a concert arena or sports stadium, but to the temple of the LORD. Could God not begin such a work now?

Stop 5: Abbeyhill Baptist

Mentally, pass the Baptist church and pray for the congregation – that it would be blessed and strengthened in the days ahead.

Stop 6: Leith Walk Primary School

Stop now at the gates of the school. Imagine yourself in an assembly and seeing students seated from dozens of different countries and whose families have very different religious backgrounds. Imagine the kind of ministry that would be needed in order to have a positive spiritual impact on the school. Pray that the head teacher would be open to Christian influence and that HEC might be able to partner with SU and other churches to build a ministry in the school. Pray boldly for the children and families in the community.

Stop 7: University Student Accommodation

As you move toward Leith Walk picture yourself glancing over to Prestige Student Living Apartments. This building reminds you of the many locations around us where university students live. Pray now for the students in our fellowship, for UCCF and the CUs, and for the opportunity that HEC has to disciple and evangelise students from Scotland and abroad.

Stop 8: Leith Walk

Pause for a moment and look at Leith Walk. Remind yourself of Grace Leith Church and the new church plant, Hope Church, led by Derek Lamont. Think of the social need hidden behind the storefronts of restaurants and coffee shops. Pray for God's blessing on the Leith community.

Stop 9: Montgomery Street Park

As you leave Leith Walk, you take Montgomery Street back to the church. When you get to the park, you stop again for a moment of reflection and prayer. You look at all of the people in the park walking their dogs. You see the new playpark equipment and kids kicking a football. You turn around and look at the many stories of flats. You ask the question, "How could we ever reach these people?" Suddenly, Jesus' words to the blind man in Matthew 9 echo in the depths of your heart: "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" You recall Jesus' follow-up statement in the same story: "According to your faith let it be to you."
Do you believe that Jesus can revive the area around Montgomery Street?

Stop 10: Carlton Hill

At the end of this prayer walk you find yourself at the crest of Carlton Hill. From the height, you can see the whole of Meadowbank, Easter Road, and Leith. As a bracing wind sweeps through your soul, you feel like Moses at the top of Mount Pisgah. There is the promised land before you. Whether or not you will live to see the re-evangelisation of East Edinburgh, only God knows. But faith surges in your soul. Once again you hear a voice echoing in your heart: "Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you...Be strong and courageous; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go".

Mission Prayer Meeting

Save the date! Our next mission prayer meeting will be on Saturday 3rd February at 9am on Zoom. Come along and hear updates from those serving overseas and spend time praying for them.

Book Group

The next Book Group will be on Saturday 3rd February at 9 Craigentiny 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.

Letter from Tim Rawlinson (Tranent Church Plant)

Dear brothers and sisters,

The start of a new year has been a good time for us to pause, take stock, and rejoice at the innumerable ways in which our God has blessed and provided for us over the past 12 months. In reflecting, I have often been drawn to 2 Corinthians 9, a reminder that this great generosity that we have received is supposed to rebound in cheerful giving, fuelled by thanks to God for his *'inexpressible gift!'*

I write to you with deep & humble gratitude for the ways in which you as a church have blessed and encouraged us this past year. The Lord's grace has overflowed to us through you. It has been my joy to have a connection with you over a number of years through individuals in your fellowship, and my privilege to have been able to preach God's word to you on occasion. I am grateful for your ongoing prayerful interest in us as a family, and in the work that the Lord has given us to do, first in Gracemount, and now in Tranent. Over the past few years, several of your members have exemplified to us what it looks like to exercise a ministry of encouragement.

I would like to extend our thanks, too, for the generous financial gift you sent towards our Tranent building fund as part of your Christmas offering. I have no doubt that your gift was indeed a *'cheerful'* one, and I am confident in the Lord's promises that *'you will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.'* I am praying that in years to come there will be a church established in Tranent that exercises the same kind of sacrificial generosity that you have demonstrated to us. We are immensely grateful for your partnership in the gospel. Please be assured of our ongoing prayers for you as a church.

In Christ, by grace, Tim Rawlinson (on behalf of the elders of Musselburgh Baptist Church).

Thanksgiving Service for the Life and Ministry of Andy Bathgate



A Thanksgiving Service for Andy Bathgate will be held at Charlotte Chapel, 58 Shandwick Place, Edinburgh on **Saturday 27th January at 1.30pm.**

Contributions will be made by folks from the many Christian organisations who were blessed by Andy and his ministry.

Light refreshments will be provided and please register [here](#) so that the organisers have an idea of numbers.

Church Calendar – Community Week 2024

For your prayers and info:

- Monday:
 - Baby and Toddler Group from 10 – 11.30am
 - Warm Space from 12noon – 3pm
 - Community Week Prayer Meeting at 7pm
- Tuesday:
 - Warm Space from 12noon – 3pm
 - Pickleball and Table Tennis at 7pm in the church
- Wednesday:
 - Cream Tea from 12noon – 3pm
 - Quiz at 7.30pm
- Thursday:
 - Warm Space from 12noon – 3pm
 - Global Food Night at 7pm
- Friday:
 - Family fun afternoon from 2-4pm
 - Scottish night with a ceilidh at 7.30pm
- Sunday:
 - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Joe Barnard preaching.
 - Hope Explored at 6pm in the church



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