

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

### Welcome to new members

It was a joy to welcome Ann Sandell and Ezra Allen into membership last month. Here they share their testimonies with us.

**Ann:** Brought up in a Christian home, daughter of The Manse, my childhood was carefree. Known as a chatterbox and daydreamer in my beloved Lossiemouth, idyllic.

I remember vividly an evening in May 1979, when I gave my heart and life to Jesus. The peace and joy were palpable. I told everyone at school and anyone else who would listen, how wonderful Jesus is. I was involved in youth fellowships, summer missions and music groups, a good life.

At the age of 17, I was dragged to the big city. It was a difficult period of transition and it took a long time to settle. Again The Lord was near. I made wonderful friends, began my studies and served in church. Glasgow wasn't so bad. In December 1990 I testified again to the faithfulness of God as I was baptised declaring His Lordship over my life.

My career in Social Care was varied and challenging at times but very happy. I have lived an unremarkable life but have always considered myself blessed. I have faced some heartbreaks, most of us have. I have been challenged, scarred and changed. My Lord has been close by, gentle and kind. He is a good God.

Now I begin a new season, due to my health here in the city of my birth. Once again this move was not by choice but God made it clear that it was His plan. I would love to say that throughout these 44 years I have been unwavering, passionate and wholly for God. I have not. I am grateful that God uses flawed and broken people. I am thankful too that He has brought me here to Holyrood Evangelical and for the welcome I have received. I offer friendship and hope I can serve where there is need.

One of my favourite verses in Scripture Psalm 25 v 4 and 5 – 'Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour, and my hope is in you all day long.'



**Ezra:** My first years were spent in West London, before my family moved further north to plant a church in Huddersfield. As the son of a minister I had the great pleasure and challenge of seeing church with all its complexities in two very different settings. However, as an adolescent, church in Huddersfield became less of a pleasure and more of a challenge, and I railed against what I perceived as the weakness of the church. But my anger was complicated by what I knew of my own weaknesses. As I came to a greater understanding of other people's shortcomings I was becoming more uncomfortable with my own shortcomings, and the gospel that had just previously been a fact of life, was becoming an indictment against my life. Whatever sin I knew I had committed I was sure there were far greater sins that I could so easily commit and excuse. Increasingly, my anger became mixed with a fear of judgment and a fear of hell. My standards for goodness were not enough to save me. And so, over some years I became sure that I was only saved by God's goodness in delivering me from death to life through His son's shed blood. As that fact became less and less a family myth, and more and more personal reality, I saw slow changes in my heart.

This journey towards repentance and then assurance was by no means straightforward, and many personal sorrows and habitual sin took months and years from a consistent and clear expression of faith. It was only until university that I took Christ, with all His counter-cultural demands, as the only real grounds of my life and the best aim of my future. There, I was blessed with Bible-handling skills, good habits, and Christian companions.

The last few years, though marked with many unexpected turns and disappointments, have only confirmed how central the church is in bringing God's people into families and taking hold of the faith, hope, and love set before them. Becoming a member of Holyrood has only made this more true for me.



## Easter Holidays

Joe is on holiday this week (Monday 8<sup>th</sup> until Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April). For any pastoral matters when Joe is away, please speak to one of the elders (Aaron Allen, Alasdair Roberts, Alex MacDonald, Andy Scott, Ernie Shippin, John Stewart, Mark Malaczynski, Murdo Macleod, Nick Archer, Robert Nelson and Roy Tatton).

Jon Gemmell will take our morning service on **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April** when Joe's on holiday. Thank you, Jon! Home Groups will meet that Sunday.

## Prayer Meetings

Here's the plan for the up and coming prayer meetings:

- This Wednesday (10<sup>th</sup> April) we will have our final Zoom prayer meeting together. 7pm as usual.
- From Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April we will start meeting in person every week with a Zoom option for those who can't make it in person. 7pm start and refreshment from 6.45pm for those in the building.

## A Thank You from Lorna Ferguson

A thank you card has arrived from Lorna and will go up on one of the notice boards in the church foyer - 'To Everyone at HEC, I wanted to write to thank you all so much for the generous support to OMF for my work here in Japan. I appreciate it so much together with all of your faithful prayers.

I am looking forward to catching up with you, and getting to know those who are new to the fellowship when I come back to Scotland in early December for 8 months. Every blessing on HEC's ministry, Lorna'

## Biblical Counselling UK – Grieving with Hope



When our friends and family face loss, we long to help them well but all too often we struggle to know how to respond. Our words can falter, we can say things that wound, and, in the end, we may find ourselves tempted to withdraw. But, in Jesus, there is hope – for those who mourn and for those who walk alongside! Join BCUK at their regional conferences to look at how to support those who are grieving.

When: **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April** from 10am until 3pm

Where: St Columba's Free Church, Johnson Terrace, Edinburgh

For more details and to book a ticket, go to <https://bcuk.org/event/grieving-with-hope-edinburgh/>

## Meet a Modern-Day John Wycliffe

On **Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April** at 7.30pm we are hosting Wycliffe Bible Translators and an evening with Komi Sena.

Wycliffe Bible Translators partners with 'modern-day John Wycliffes' all around the world, who are working to do for their people what John Wycliffe did for speakers of English, and together create a world where everyone can know Jesus through the Bible.



Komi Sena leads the Ife Bible translation project in Togo and works as a Bible translation adviser to a number of language groups in West Africa. Komi has an amazing story to share about the challenges and joys he has seen as God works through his word being made available in people's languages. For more details contact [churches@wycliffe.org.uk](mailto:churches@wycliffe.org.uk)

## Love Life Prayer and Pro Life Chain



On **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April**, from 10.15 – 10.45am Charlotte Chapel are hosting a time of prayer on the theme of “Love Life”.

This is a chance for Christians to meet and pray together before SPUC’s National Pro-Life Chain at 11am on Lothian Road. The Pro-Life Chain is a peaceful witness to the millions of unborn children aborted since the implementation of the Abortion Act in 1968.

## Slugs and Bugs are in town!

Randall Goodgame (creator of Slugs and Bugs) will be in Edinburgh in May and is doing two family concerts for kids and all grown-ups who are young at heart!

Slugs and Bugs LIVE will be happening at Carrubbers on **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May** at 7pm (tickets are available [here](#)) and at Hope City Church on **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May** at 4pm (tickets are available [here](#)). Contact [Liz@holyroodevangelical.org](mailto:Liz@holyroodevangelical.org) for more details.



## Church Calendar

For your info and prayers-

- Wednesday: Prayer meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Sunday:
  - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Jon Gemmell preaching.
  - Home Groups meet. Please contact [Liz@holyroodevangelical.org](mailto:Liz@holyroodevangelical.org) for more information.



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

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