

## Weekly Newsletter: 21 January 2025

### Reflection: The dawn is breaking

By Sam Allen

The gap between the Year Past and the New Year is paper-thin. Some of us recognise it perhaps with a party, or a family tradition. But these ways of marking the change can feel like we're trying to make it more real than it actually is. After all, the relentless normalities of life continue on, bodies need to be fed, clothes washed; the sun rises: Nature unconcerned with our timekeeping.

Or think of another new beginning. Think perhaps of that moment during a coronation when the shout rings out in the hall - "The King is dead, long live the King!" Here the change is not instantaneous, there is the briefest pause as the syllables are formed, space in time when there is not a king, and yet must be one.

The Bible gives us a metaphor to teach us how to live in the time that God has put us in. It uses the image of a slow-rising dawn; picturing humanity as the inhabitants of a dark land waiting for the dawn and the eventual daybreak.

This is why Jesus is called the "Morning Star", the "Dayspring". He has come into our world of darkness, and his coming has brought the first thin rays of light into our world. His coming hasn't dispelled all the shadows, the world around us is in that early-morning half light. But his coming brings the certainty that the darkness is fleeing, that the full zenith of his second coming will destroy the darkness and bring our world into glorious colour and focus.

Aside from the beauty of this image, I think there are three ways that God intends us to be guided by this picture: Firstly we can know that the darkness is fleeing! As surely as the morning follows the dawn, so surely will Christ return to us. Secondly, it is this darkness that Christ entered. Knowingly and willingly he came into a broken world of unseen pitfalls, of subterfuge, of uncertainty and danger for our sakes. Finally, we need to be reminded that Heaven is the full day! Compared to our world now it is clearer, brighter, safer and infinitely more certain.

And so how do we live? We live with hope, we live with expectancy, we live watching the rays of light break in over the hilltops, watching Christ build his kingdom amongst us. Trusting that when Christ returns in glory, the world will take on colour and shape, that safety and warmth will dispel the darkness.

Proverbs 1:18, 2 Peter 1:19, Isaiah 9:2, Revelation 21:23, 22:16

## Christmas Appeal – Thank You from Friends International

Thank you, Holyrood Evangelical, for blessing our team and the international students we serve with your gift. It makes a big difference for us to have your support, both financially to help cover the costs of these trips, but also as a church that prays and partners so well. We are SO thankful for your church community! We'll be using these funds to supplement the costs of the day trips for students. These trips have been very effective at helping us connect with international students in a deeper way, sometimes leading to them coming to faith-based events, church, or even coming to know Jesus! Your gift makes our care for them that much easier.

Grace and peace to you, Warren MacLeod (Edinburgh Centre Team Leader)

## Women's Bible Studies

We're looking forward to getting together on **Thursday morning from 10:30am – 11.30am** to study God's word, pray and enjoy fellowship together (and one or two scones!). Please join us if you can!

## Book Group

This month's book group meets at 3.30pm **this Saturday** at 9 Craigentenny Avenue and we are reading *To a Different Drum* by Pauline Hamilton. For more information speak to Anncriis Roberts.

## SU Scotland - Quiz Night

On **Saturday 1 February** at 7.30pm the es-team from SU Scotland are holding a Fundraising Quiz Night at a Ferniehill Evangelical Church, Edinburgh EH17 7AA. Suggested donation of £5 per person. Refreshments included and contact Alasdair Roberts if you're keen to attend or for more details.

## Bethany Christian Trust Rapid Re-accommodation Welcome Centre

As well as fighting hard against the causes of homelessness, Bethany Christian Trust also meet people in immediate need of food and accommodation. One of their crisis services is the Rapid Re-accommodation Welcome Centre, where anyone who would otherwise be rough sleeping in Edinburgh, is provided with safe, welcoming accommodation and warm meals. Find out more here: <https://www.bethanychristiantrust.com/crisis-intervention/>

HEC have supported this work for many years, both financially and practically - Bethany's Buy a Bed scheme is one of the projects we are supporting in our Christmas 2024 Appeal. This season we again have a team cooking and serving food at the Welcome Centre on Hogmanay, then in February and April.

The Crisis Intervention team at the centre have made us aware of the need for toiletries, warm socks and underwear for their guests. If you are able, please consider purchasing one or more of the following items.

There will be a labelled box in the church foyer for these items. They will be collected and taken to the Welcome Centre on **Sunday 23 February**.

Please note that the vast majority of guests at the centre are men. Items needed:

- New toiletries - shower gel, toothpaste, toothbrushes, face wash, moisturiser, lip balm, deodorant (full and travel size are needed)
- Socks- new warm socks, all adult sizes needed
- Underwear- new men's cotton boxer shorts and briefs, all sizes needed.

If you have any questions or need more information, speak to Hannah Rankin.

## Church Calendar

For your info and prayers:

- Wednesday: Home Groups across the city (contact [Liz@holyroodevangelical.org](mailto:Liz@holyroodevangelical.org) if you'd like more details)
- Thursday: Women's Bible Study at 10.30am in the church
- Saturday:
  - Session Meeting from 9.30-11.30am in the church
  - Book Group at 3.30pm
- Sunday:
  - Morning service at 10.30am – Joe Barnard preaching (live streamed)
  - Evening service at 6pm – Joe Barnard preaching (live streamed)
- Monday:
  - Baby & Toddlers Group 10am – 11.30am
  - Warm Space 12 noon to 3pm
  - Women's Ministry Meeting at 7.30pm



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

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