



Spirit & Saltire

Good News from the ICCM Church in Scotland – Dec/Jan 2018

Heavenly Hogmanay!

Bringing in the New Year...Scotland-style

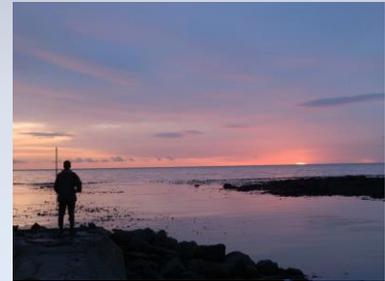
From 30th December 2017 to 2nd January 2018, the Scottish churches enjoyed our annual Hogmanay retreat at the Windmill Christian Centre in historic coastal Arbroath.

'Hogmanay' is the traditional Scottish name for the New Year celebration, and the event inspired all who attended with vision for the year to come. The theme of **New Beginnings** provided a platform the participants to take a leap of faith forward and dream big for God. It was a special occasion for the 60 attendees of various ages and congregations to celebrate, unwind and strengthen bonds of church family. New friendships were formed and others strengthened as people took time away from the busy

Combining the celebratory spirit of Scotland's Hogmanay with the dynamism of the Holy Spirit living in God's church is like making a little piece of heaven on earth.

routine of everyday life. With easy access to the coast and historic sites in the town, attendees were able to watch the sunrise, spend time walking along the North Sea, and take in local culture.

Times of prayer, preaching and sharing were woven throughout the retreat. Lessons focused on highlighting 3 dimensions of new beginnings: expecting new miracles from God, staying motivated daily by God's new mercies, and creating new memories striving for growth and spiritual victory in 2018. New Year's Eve started off with a tremendous talent show where participants entertained one another with the many talents with which God has blessed the group (especially the children!). This was followed by a ceilidh ('kay-lee') – a traditional Scottish social dance - where everyone learned new steps to bring in the New Year in style. For those brave enough to participate, the annual local Loony Dook saw a large crowd jump into ice-cold water on New Year's Day - Yikes!



Prayer on the Arbroath Coast



Party Time!



Bonfire Fellowship



At the Loony Dook!

Bravehearts: Taking the One Year Challenge

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, "Here am I. Send Me!" – Isaiah 6:8

In recent years, the One Year Challenge (OYC) program has been making waves across ICOC congregations. OYC provides an avenue for young disciples to respond to God's call to build and serve his kingdom, primarily in cities with great need to hear the good news. In Scotland, God has blessed us with the ability to bring several people for one year or longer to serve the cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh.

A growing demographic of people in Scotland believe that Christianity is irrelevant and view religion as a thing of the past. There is great need for men and women of God to show others that Jesus's sacrifice on the cross and his resurrection are still powerful two millennia later.



Edinburgh student ministry unites

The Edinburgh Church welcomes its first, courageous Braveheart for the One Year Challenge! Hailey Wright (Nashville, TN) touched

down in Edinburgh in early January to begin a OYC in one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Edinburgh has witnessed 4 teen baptisms in the last few years, and a recent influx of young Christian men and women at our universities. Hailey instantly helps form the core of a new re-loaded campus ministry in Edinburgh, and she will also serve the next generation of Christians by working with local teenagers.

The Edinburgh Church looks forward to future OYC'er, Dre'Shawn Frencher (Los Angeles, CA), joining this May. God has also blessed our church with the arrival of Emily Vogel from Tallahassee, FL (USA) to study for one year at the University of Edinburgh as a graduate student. Also, two transfer students from Boston, MA (USA), Zack Walters and Daniel Van Auken, have joined us from across the pond to study at Napier University in Edinburgh for five months. All three of these Christians studying abroad in Edinburgh provide a fantastic boost to our campus ministry.



Emily & Nick at a Celtic match

In Glasgow, Nick Ghalustians from the London ICOC and Emily Schaub from the Chicago Church of Christ arrived in autumn of 2017 to support the preteen, students and professional singles ministry. The efforts are bearing fruit across the 3 major Glasgow-based universities, where invitations and Bible discussions are bringing out visitors and studies are ongoing. They have brought energy and love to the Glasgow church's preteen ministry, where several of the youngsters are eager to grow in faith. As well, a new single men's Dgroup is forming as a result of growth. Nick and Emily are very thankful to be part of the family of believers in Glasgow, and the church sees the coming of Nick and Emily as a blessing from God. Together, they all look forward to growing together as God grows the church.

Pray for the OYC in Scotland to bring glory to God!

Michael Mabbott, Welcome to God's Kingdom!

Q/A - Getting to Know Our Newest Brother in Christ

Michael Mabbott was baptized in Glasgow on Jan 21st. Born to English-Scottish parents and raised in the UK, Mike's journey from skepticism to faith is an inspiring reminder of God's grace.



Mike (left) starts his life anew!

Q: Share a little bit about what faith and Christianity was like for you growing up.

Well, practically non-existent actually. My parents weren't particularly orthodox about anything. I think I maybe went to church once or twice with the Cub Scouts, for example. And of course you studied a little bit in RE (religious education), but apart from that there wasn't much Christianity around. I believe it was an active choice on the part of my parents to say "We'll let him make his own decision later in life." Later on I sort of viewed it as unnecessary or perhaps a hindrance to progress. I studied biology in university, so I developed the mindset that searched for empirical evidence, and certain things that were presented from the

Bible seemed to say "Well, you can't argue with that!" But I only had direct knowledge of Bible quotes from the Civilization Games.

Q: You mention your university years. You studied fields that produced some of the world's most outspoken atheists. (Michael completed a degree in Biological Sciences at Edinburgh Napier University, and a Masters in Medical Genetics at University of Glasgow). How did studying in those fields influence your faith?

Well, I never read any Richard Dawkins. I saw part of a TV show that he was doing on faith schools and found him very off-putting. But I certainly found myself very split. I think I spent many many years trying to convince myself I was an atheist, just because I was studying in this field and felt like you couldn't believe in God. But I had this intuitive sense that God was real and God exists.

Q: What were some key moments in your journey toward embracing God and Jesus Christ as the answer for your life?

There were some periods where I was struggling with life and stressful situations at work. I felt very isolated, and in that moment of crisis I turned to God. I thought, "You'll always be there. I can

talk to you, and please give me strength to keep going with this". That was a moment where I really felt like I had a connection with God. Later on after that, I was out at Starbucks by the University (of Glasgow) – just doing something to get out and about. And there was this nice lady (Cara Ugolini) in the line inviting people to a Bible discussion happening there and then. And I thought, "Okay, why not? Let's do this!" So I popped upstairs and had a Bible study with Nick (Ghalustians). They were having a BBQ later on, and I went along since I was already out looking for things to do anyhow. When I met people there the constant question was "So, are you a Christian?" And I thought "No...but I don't know how far off from that I am." It really came down to having an open mind and learning what Christianity was really about. And that was the ultimate starting point for doing Bible studies. One (Bible study) that I found particularly memorable was the study on "repentance" and learning what that actually means. After the study sitting in the café, Mike (Jarvis) went up to pay, and I realized that in the time it takes for him to go pay and come back, I could choose to

repent! Repentance is that simple, as it is a change of mind and choosing to turn toward God. But the hard part would be keeping up with the change, so I had to go sleep on it and really think about it for a while. Even now a couple days after being baptized, my life hasn't miraculously transformed overnight, but I do feel like something about my mentality has shifted in a positive way and everything else can flow from that.

Q: What are you looking forward to in your new life as a Christian?

I'm looking forward to having a life with purpose. To know that God has this plan, and there is this path out there for me, and my life's journey is in line with the path that God has set out – that's definitely something I'm looking forward to. Christianity is so much about relationships with people as well, so I'm looking forward to building relationships with people inside and outside the church. I also realized that while God works miracles and can do fantastic things, God also simply works through people. I think that God uses people in different scenarios, and I see in the church how God decides "that's my guy" to do such and such. And now that's me. In the run up to the baptism, it was encouraging for me to realize: Yes, now I can be God's guy!

Special Highlights

Vision and Themes for Scotland Churches

The new vision for the Edinburgh Church of Christ is **Regenerate**. Our church in Edinburgh aspires to regenerate life in community. This means we are a church that not only perseveres and survives, but we dare to hope that God will regenerate his people in this city now and for years to come in dynamic, often unexpected ways!

For the past couple of years, the Glasgow church has been cultivating a vision dubbed **GlasGROW**. This three-prong plan involves great meetings, godly small groups, and a "Go" mentality in the spirit of the Great Commission. In 2018, the church is boosting this vision with an annual theme of "Renewal" - looking to God to breathe revival and inspiration into our Christian life and mission.

In the month of March the Scotland Churches are planning a unified "Renewal" campaign, along with the Birmingham Church. Please pray for great faith and fruit to come from this effort!

All-Scotland Christmas

The Edinburgh Church hosted an All-Scotland Carol Service on December 17th that saw 85 souls in attendance. The time was filled with worship,

caroling, fellowship and preaching. Like Santa Claus with gifts in tow, the Lord blessed the event with some special memories. John Hancell, from the Brisbane Australia church, came and preached an inspiring and convicting lesson. And the church was greatly encouraged to welcome and reconnect with Andy Broughton, who led the Edinburgh planting 25 years ago. Edinburgh and Glasgow are a single family church, and times like the Carol service remind us how blessed we are together in the family of God.

Burns Night on Fire!

January 25th is a national heritage day in Scotland, as it reflects on the remarkable influence of its iconic poet Robert Burns. For Mike and Marie Jarvis in Glasgow, hosting a "Burns Night" also presents a key opportunity to make an evangelistic impact in the community.

An evening filled with haggis, Burns poetry, speeches and friendly chatter was combined with Christian hospitality at the Jarvis home. Amazingly, and in answer to prayer, about 80 people (a mix of disciples, community friends, and neighbors) attended. Pray for the South-Clyde family group that suddenly has its hands full with follow-up and outreach opportunities!



The Edinburgh and Glasgow churches sing Christmas Carols together (above left), while Mike Jarvis presides over Burns Night (below left). Disciples enjoy the Arbroath waters at the Loony Dook (above right) and at prayer time (below right).



This newsletter is a cooperative effort of the Glasgow Church of Christ and Edinburgh International Church of Christ, members of ICC Missions.

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Thanks to all who contributed to this newsletter. Please stay in contact with our churches!

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