



February 2018

Dear Friends,

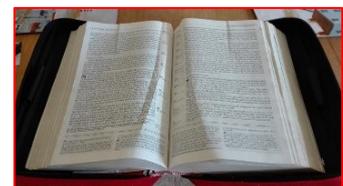
'Are you settled?' has become one of the most frequently asked and most difficult answerable questions in recent weeks. Yes, we have physically arrived and rent a house that we like. The next steps towards feeling settled would involve being well established and serving in a local church, understanding the local accents, having friends, avoiding certain cultural pitfalls, knowing where in the jungle of countless shops the best deals are offered, getting used to the hugely different climate - and the list goes on. There are still many mountains to climb before we can claim feeling settled but we have made a good start. The rest is a question of patience, endurance and warm clothes. 😊



A bumpy beginning

The bumpy landing in gale force winds on New Year's Eve at Edinburgh Airport was a scary, but also a very practical illustration of a bumpy beginning of our new life in Scotland. Blood tests results which demand further specialist investigation, discovery of gaps in our national insurance contributions for the past five years, a car hire company trying to make us responsible for damage which was not caused by us, lost hand luggage after flying back to Edinburgh after Christmas, printer then laptop then internet playing up. This reminds us very much of life and ministry at NETS in Namibia where almost everything would go wrong at the beginning of each academic year. Clearly the devil's discouragement strategy is the same everywhere.

But we serve a sovereign God who in the midst of all this has prepared a place for us, who has provided and pampered us to an extent that we often shook our heads in amazement. From material provision in the form of a car, furniture and money to practical help in the form of people helping with the move and offering heart-warming hospitality to overwhelming encouragement in the form of phone calls, Christmas cards, Facebook messages and faithful prayer support. Answered prayer so far included the car hire company withdrawing their accusation, the return of Kerstin's hand luggage (with most items shredded or missing, but her beloved bible being almost undamaged) and IT equipment functioning normally. We serve a living and mighty God. And we are very grateful to you who are part of God's gift to us as you pray, support us financially and encourage us in so many other ways.



Edinburgh Bible College

The spring term at Edinburgh Bible College (EBC) started on 8 January. Thorsten is teaching three modules: Doctrine of Sin, Doctrine of Man and Old Testament Overview. It has been good to get to know board members, staff and students of EBC although most conversations involved a lot of confusion on our side due to Scottish and Northern Irish accents. Thorsten loves the teaching and students are very keen to dig deeper into God's word.

We also had a meeting with Adam, an EBC graduate from Poland and his pastor who visited in December. Adam has great passion and desire to see Polish pastors equipped to faithfully preach God's word. There are, however, many stumbling blocks. Please pray for his efforts to prepare the ground to have pastors attend a taster conference on expository preaching that will be held by our principal John Brand later this year. Pray that through the conference church leaders will develop a growing desire for more training. Lord willing EBC could play a crucial role in this.



The search for a church

We have visited five churches so far and have been encouraged by the warm welcome we received everywhere. Visiting a different church every Sunday is tiring and not helpful when at the same time you are longing to build relationships and find friends. But Scottish hospitality does not disappoint. 'Where have you been hiding?' has been my (Kerstin's) favourite comment from a church member so far when greeting us for the first time. It was as if he had waited for us to turn up.

In an effort to build relationships and get settled we have attended an Episcopal and a Baptist church more than just once. Thorsten has preached in one and has also been invited to preach in the other. St. Thomas' Costorphine in Edinburgh has been particularly encouraging and supportive. The church finds itself at an important crossroads and the minister and vestry need much prayer for wisdom as they make important decisions for the future. (<https://www.saintthomas.org.uk/media/>)

Prayer points

- Praise God for his provision, answers to prayers and many encouragements; for a good start at EBC and the warm welcome from churches
- Pray for EBC as we seek to build more relationships with local churches and recruit new students; for Adam and the potential of training Polish pastors
- Pray for St. Thomas Costorphine and Dedridge Baptist Church, their ministers and the impact these churches can have in the local community
- Pray for Thorsten's teaching and preaching ministry and his health (MRI scan on 6 February.)
- Pray for Kerstin as she seeks to develop her own ministry role in Scotland, supports Thorsten and continues to study counselling

The desire to get a foot in the door of our local community here in Livingston took us to a small Baptist church only a five minute-walk from our house. Their new minister was inducted in early January. He is a lovely man with a great gift of preaching and contagious love for Jesus and the word of God. A large part of the population in Livingston (as in the whole of Scotland) is unreached. Please pray with us for the witness of this church in Livingston. (<http://dedridgebaptistchurch.org.uk/media/>)

It will be exciting to see what the Lord will do through the ministers of St. Thomas and Dedridge Baptist Church and the two congregations. Thank you for your ongoing prayers. The power of prayer is real. Let's see the Lord work through the prayers of his people as we seek to train others for ministry and reach out to the lost.

With much love in Christ,

Kerstin & Thorsten

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