

# JANUARY 2019



Dear friends

2018 will be a year that we won't easily forget. It was the year of adjustment to a very different culture and way of life. We embarked on a steep learning curve as we handled telephone conversations with robots, gradually remembered to never leave the house without waterproof clothing and reluctantly made peace with the fact that every personal or ministry meeting is planned way in advance providing there is still space in the dreaded diary. We will also remember 2018 as the year of catching up with old and making new friends, the year of cancelled holidays and close encounters with the good and bad of the NHS. Thorsten continues to be deaf on one ear and expects to have surgery on 18 January.

But most of all the year has highlighted God's amazing faithfulness and love for us as he ministered to us through his word, provided for us through his people and blessed us with the experience of his beautiful creation. We are so thankful for the privilege of serving the Lord at Edinburgh Bible College (EBC), in one-to-one relationships and in different church contexts. We see him at work in our students at EBC, in our church, St Thomas, as we continue to go with them through the painful process of disaffiliating from the Scottish Episcopal Church and in the life of several folks in Namibia who we continue to mentor and encourage via Skype, Email and WhatsApp.

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## A questionable role model as forerunner

In November it was announced that Scotland will become the first country in the world to embed the teaching of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex rights in the school curriculum. Most Christians do not feel equipped to appropriately respond to these and other ethical issues which also impact the church. On 23 January Edinburgh Bible College will run a series of seminars which are open to anyone to attend. We will address moral and ethical issues which are current in society and seek to develop a biblical response. Please pray that many will attend and that the seminars will serve to better equip local Christians.

## A fisher of men in a fishing village

The steady spiritual decline in Scotland has led to an ever-increasing number of small churches without a pastor. Several of these churches approach EBC for help on a regular basis. And so they are extremely grateful when EBC students are willing to lead and preach at their services. It is a win-win situation. Our students have opportunity to put into practice what they learn at our college and at the same time they can support and encourage struggling congregations.

Joe is a third-year student of the Advanced Ministry Apprenticeship Programme (AMAP). The Lord has clearly called and gifted him to become a minister of the gospel. Later this month he will begin a placement in a small congregation in a fishing village in Fife. He has preached there occasionally in 2018 and built relationships

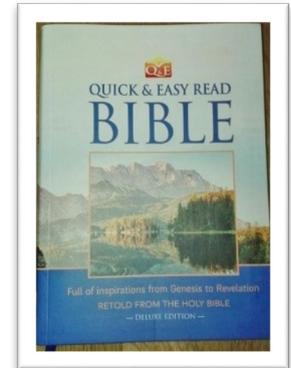


with the people. Where others see a dying congregation in a sleepy village of 1,500 inhabitants, Joe sees potential. Jesus put this congregation on his heart. We are greatly encouraged by his passion to revitalise a once thriving church. Please pray for him as he seeks to encourage the church to pray for revival and reach out to the lost.

**‘The most valuable thing that this world affords...’**

Those were the words of the Archbishop when he presented Queen Elizabeth II with the Bible at her

coronation and the same words proved to be effective in December as a group of 30 from our church knocked on doors to give away beautiful bibles wrapped up in Christmas paper and invitations to Christmas services. Those who were initially reluctant accepted our gift with curiosity in their eyes. But our visits also highlighted the widespread apathy towards God. Please pray with us that as we follow up on those visits in 2019 that the Lord will prepare hearts and open doors for us.



**Blessed beyond words**

Due to Thorsten’s ear we were not able to travel to Germany for Christmas. Instead the very two families who first accommodated us when we were still strangers looking for somewhere to live in Edinburgh invited us - one on Christmas Eve and the other on Christmas Day. But the icing on the cake was when a young Namibian lady turned up in our church on Christmas Day and was then invited by our friends to celebrate Christmas with us. It did not take us long to discover that she was from the same church where Thorsten was a pastor for five years! What a treat! We are so thankful to God for blessing us

beyond measure. He turned strangers into friends, gave us a great new spiritual home at St Thomas and even provided us with a new car when the old was on its last legs. Many thanks to all of you who prayed for us and supported us in so many different ways – be it regular support, one-off gifts towards a car or by patiently listening to our seemingly never-ending stories from and comparisons with Namibia (you know who you are 😊).

With warmest greetings in Christ,  
Thorsten & Kerstin

**Prayer points**

- Praise and thanks to God for friends, financial provision, fruit at EBC and St Thomas Church
- For EBC students as they seek to encourage and support small churches and for the EBC seminars on moral and ethical issues
- For St Thomas Church in Edinburgh in all we do to reach the community with the Gospel and for the process of disaffiliation from the Scottish Episcopal Church
- for the healing of Thorsten’s ear

Our regular support is not sufficient to enable us to stay in Scotland for longer than three years. Any one-off or small regular financial gift will be a great encouragement to us and help us serving the Lord longer term in Scotland. Donations can be made via the Crosslinks website <https://www.crosslinks.org/people-and-places/europe/thorsten-and-kerstin-prill/>

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