

# JANUARY 2020



Happy New Year dear friends,

May the Lord crown your year with his goodness and help you *'run with perseverance the race marked out for us'* (Heb.12:1)! This is certainly what he has done for us in 2019 and we know that we can rely on his faithfulness also in 2020. As we got ready to fly back to Scotland after two weeks in Germany, we realised with relief that it felt like preparing to 'go home'.

### **Straight-forward but not easy to answer...**

... (if you want to be truthful) is the frequently asked question 'Did you have a nice Christmas?' Family can bring out the worst in you. We find that no-one is better at reminding us (unintentionally) of our sinfulness. One can have the best intentions in the world to be loving, supportive and understanding no matter how you are being treated. The ground-crashing reality is that we struggle to deal with all the brokenness we encounter. We feel helpless in the face of overhyped expectations, lack of common sense and aggression in response to our attempt to set up healthy boundaries. During our time in Germany we juggled clingy behaviour on one side of the family and emotional distance and conscious rejection of God on the other. We would appreciate your prayers for wisdom as we plan the frequency and length of visits to Germany in 2020. Please also pray for Thorsten's father and the spiritual battle waging in him bringing out bitterness, life's disappointments as well as occasional expressions of faith.

### **Random signs for being at home in Scotland**

- ✓ Driving in town without Satnav (most of the time)
- ✓ Enjoying Ceilidh dancing (traditional Scottish country dance)
- ✓ Competing with a wee 'Scotsman' in an egg-and-spoon race
- ✓ Falling in love with the Scottish Highlands
- ✓ Loving Cullen Skink and eating too many scones
- ✓ Finding board game lovers and having regular play dates
- ✓ Finally being fully equipped with water-proof clothing
- ✓ Understanding Scottish accents (providing they are not taxi drivers, barbers and are not from West Lothian, Glasgow, Aberdeen or the Highlands...)



At Edinburgh Bible College we began the New Year with the relaunching of our website ([www.edinburghbiblecollege.co.uk/](http://www.edinburghbiblecollege.co.uk/)) and the publication of a great new prospectus ([www.edinburghbiblecollege.co.uk/prospectus/](http://www.edinburghbiblecollege.co.uk/prospectus/)). An Open-Door Day on 6 February will give people

the opportunity to sit in on lectures, talk to students and staff, and get answers to questions. Please help us spread the news.

After a week of intensive teaching (Missiology and Spiritual Formation for third years and Discipleship for Diploma students) the normal timetable kicked off on 13 January. Thorsten looks forward to teaching Spiritual Disciplines, Bible Overview and John's Gospel as well as overseeing the Advanced Ministry Apprenticeship Programme.



### When God's people pray...

He sets things in motion. God has graciously answered prayer for a growing hunger for God's word in our church. He brought Kerstin and a friend together and prompted them to extend an open invitation to the ladies in church to read the Bible with them once a week. After a slow start, six ladies have joined us and one has even commented that this group was the best thing that has happened to her over the past 12 months. Another lady has since been meeting one-to-one with Kerstin to read the Bible. It is a humble beginning, but we continue to pray for spiritual awakening and revival in Scotland.

During December we were privileged again to give away several bibles as we knocked on doors in the community. Interestingly, we observed a more open and friendly response from those who were under 30 and over 60 when engaging in conversations at the door while the middle-aged folks were indifferent or sarcastic.

For Kerstin, hardly any day ever looks the same. She divides her time between work for the college, church, pursuing a course in Christian counselling, communicating with those who support us, coming alongside Namibian friends who ask for advice and taking care of all practical issues at home so that Thorsten can concentrate on his teaching and preaching ministry. She loves the diversity of her role but sometimes struggles fitting it all in.

### Resolved to run

God's word encourages us to run rather than 'walk with the Lord'. We are told to '*run with perseverance the race marked out for us*' (Heb.12:1), '*run in such a way as to get the prize*' (1Cor.9:24), '*run in the path of God's commands*' (Ps.119:32), not '*aimlessly*' (1Cor.9:26) and above all we are to '*finish the race*' (Acts 20:24). Running is never comfortable. It involves effort, pain, discipline, strategy and much more. It's easy to grow weary and lose heart. We can't thank you enough for partnering with us in our ministry. As we go into another year kindly pray that Jesus will be at the centre of all we think, plan and do.

With love in Christ  
Thorsten & Kerstin

### For your prayers

- **Praise God for His faithfulness and for the fact that we feel more at home in Scotland.**
- **Pray for wisdom as we seek to honour our parents and for the Lord to transform the life of Thorsten's father .**
- **Pray that EBC's new prospectus and website will attract new students and raise the profile of the college, and pray for a successful Open Day on 6<sup>th</sup> February.**
- **Pray for St Thomas Church that we may all grow in our love and desire for God's word.**
- **Pray for us that we may not grow weary or lose heart but fix our eyes on Jesus..**