

Weekly Newsletter

28th July 2026



Reflection: Midsummer Resolutions

By Joe Barnard

Before long, we'll be out of summer and back into the rhythm of normal life and normal church life. I do hope everyone is resting. An essential principle of a healthy Christian life is knowing how to slow down and even shut down. Rest is not optional. Rest finds its way into the 10 Commandments because God knows finitude and Sabbath go together. If you consistently neglect to push the pause button in life, you will indeed end up resting, but often due to illness of mind or body.

Now, times of rest are important, not just for refreshment of body, but also for refinement of perspective. You know you've rested well when, reengaging normal life, you can do so with improved vigour and vision. Before resting, you were drifting. Life fell into an intentionless cycle of habit. After resting, you are driving; your hands are back firmly on the wheel, and you are heading in a purposeful direction of vocation and discipleship.

In view of this, I hope this summer two things are happening for all of us. Yes, we are resting, but equally important, we are also discerning. We are asking the question, "What, Lord, does it look like for me – and perhaps my family – to step back into the busyness of normal life with your honour and glory constantly in view?"

That is a question, I assure you, that God will be gracious to answer. God's desire for His people is not that they circle aimlessly in the wilderness. His will is for them to enter further and further into the centre of His promises.

Now, discernment is important corporately as well as individually. We're not each summoned to live lives of personal faithfulness in detachment from one another. Rather, we're a congregation – that is, a gathering. God's purpose can only be fulfilled in *my* life as I find fulfilment in *our* life. Therefore, as you ponder the first question, you should also ponder a second one: "What, Lord, does it look like for *us* to step back into the busyness of normal life with your honour and glory constantly in view?" There are many ways to answer this question. Let me just mention one.

Two things are conspicuously in short supply in modern life, *prayer* and *worship*. No matter how hard we try, it feels as if there is never sufficient freedom or space in our daily rhythms to satisfy these needs/duties. And so, we end up with a brooding guilt complex. We always feel bad for the dilapidated condition of our prayer lives, and we never really figure out what it means to prioritise worship over both work and play.

Believe it or not, I think there's a relatively simple solution to this problem. It's as simple as writing down a few things on the calendar and treating them as non-negotiables. They are the following (in order of importance): Sunday morning worship, Sunday evening worship, and the Wednesday prayer meeting.



If you struggle with prayer, the best solution is not to try to improve in your prayer life alone but to improve in your prayer life together. Learn to be as consistent at the prayer meeting as you are at the dinner table and something wonderful will happen: *you will grow in prayerfulness.*

And if you struggle to prioritise God over self, the best solution is not to try to improve your devotional life alone but to improve your devotional life together. Learn to be as regular in Sunday worship – morning and evening – as you are in taking your daily cups of tea. Believe me: something amazing will happen. *You will grow in love of God.*

Summer will soon be over. The days will shorten and cool, and the pace of life will feel less like a country road and more like a motorway. Before the change, take a moment to make a couple of mid-summer resolutions. First, resolve to offer two sacrifices of praise to God on each Lord's Day, morning and evening. Then, be even more ambitious. Resolve to pray with God's people as often as we gather on Wednesday nights.

What you'll gain is friendship with God and with God's people; what you'll lose is, well, nothing.

Prayer Meetings

Over the summer, we are meeting for prayer every Wednesday from 7-8pm in person. There will be no online option for July and August. Contact Liz@holyroodchurch.org if you have any items for prayer or have any questions.

Summer Appeal 2026

Our summer appeal finishes on Sunday, this is the last week to give!

Each year our Summer Appeal goes towards the support of our three Holyrood missionaries – Lorna Ferguson (serving with OMF in Japan), James Stewart (serving with OMF in Singapore) and the Sorsamo Family (serving with Wycliffe in Finland). The current total is **£13,533.75**



There are two ways you can give:

1. Electronically via BACS payment to the church account: Sort Code 80-22-60, Account number 12345666 and use the reference 'Summer Appeal'
2. By cheque or cash in the offering box marked 'Summer Appeal'

Please speak to Nick Archer if you have any questions about how to give. Thank you!



Annual General Meeting

Please save the date! The church AGM will take place on **Wednesday 26th August** at 7pm in the building. It would be great if as many as possible could be there.

SASRA – Behind the Wire



We have been invited to Life 'Behind the Wire' at Ferniehill Evangelical Church on **Saturday 1st August** at 6.30pm for a 7pm start.

Come and hear stories of what God is doing among the young people of the British Armed Forces and hear about the outreach to the performers of the Royal Edinburgh Military tattoo.

Everyone is warmly invited!

Faith Mission – Study Programme

The Faith Mission are offering an Online Explore Theology Course on Thursday evenings starting on **17th September**. For more details go to - <https://www.fmbiblecollege.org.uk/explore/>

They also have a number of individual modules that you can attend in person over the autumn from church history to practical ministry. Contact Liz@holyroodchurch.org for the list of course choices and costs.

Celtic Worship – Saturday 8th August

Celtic Worship are hosting 'Then Sings My Soul', a praise event at Charlotte Chapel, on **Saturday 8th August 2026**. For more details and tickets, go [here](#).

Church Calendar

This week for your info and prayers:

- Wednesday: Prayer Meeting from 7-8pm in the church
- Sunday:
 - Morning Service at 10.30am – Joe Barnard preaching (and livestreamed)
 - Evening Service at 6pm – Joe Barnard preaching.

