

the PILLOWCASE KID

We are proud to bring your attention to the release of a new book by Alex Dunbar. *The Pillowcase Kid* is the story of one man's journey into salvation and service with its trials and triumphs. Alex is a former Superintendent of Edinburgh City Mission who has so generously gifted the proceeds of the sale of the book to the work of the Mission.

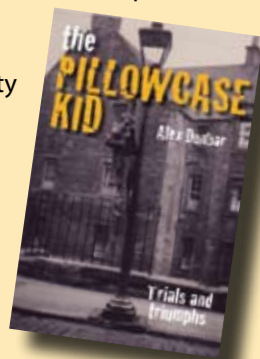
Alex writes: 'As much of my story relates to my years as a missionary/superintendent with the Edinburgh City Mission I wish the proceeds from my book to go towards the valuable work being done by God's devoted servants at Edinburgh City Mission.'

The book is available at £6.99 from:

Edinburgh City Mission office by calling 0131-554-6140 or email mail@ecm.org.uk

Faith Mission Bookshop

Niddrie Community Church



Women's Work



Over the past few months there have been many changes at the Centre in West Pilton and in the focus of my work for ECM. As a team we have begun to develop our home visiting ministry and it has been wonderful to see how many more opportunities have arisen to share God's love and the good news of Jesus. While the Centre is still open for people to drop in for tea and toast, a mug of soup and a chat or for a helping hand, our aim is to make ourselves more accessible to people by leaving the building and going to meet people in their homes.

Alongside this I have personally become much more closely involved with the Basics Bank at West Pilton on a Tuesday. Our aim is to support people through a crisis with food but to offer them much more long-term support and an eternal hope.

Praying with clients of the Basics Bank has been a particular highlight of the past few months and seeing God working in people's lives. I have been reminded that Jesus talked of only doing what he saw the Father doing and this is an example that we need to follow. We have learnt that God clearly has his hand on some people long before they walk through our doors. One such individual is a young woman 'L'. L came to Basics Bank a year ago and after one of her first visits she left clutching a Bible, saying that she felt she had hope for the first time in years. We then didn't hear from L for a year when she returned to us in crisis again and after a few weeks reached the decision that she wanted what we had – to be a Christian. However, we have tried visiting L and connecting her with a church and as yet we are waiting to see that breakthrough. She has been through a huge amount of trauma in her life and her heart is clearly striving for more. The challenge for us is to be patient, wait on God and seize every opportunity He sends our way.

So as Christmas approaches the struggles and trials of many of the poorest amongst us are highlighted. The benefit system is tightening its purse strings and the pressure to provide a merry Christmas mounts. Yet against this backdrop we know that we have a God who can provide all that we need and who can bring an order and a peace out of the chaos of our lives.

SARAH JOHNSON

Basics Bank



Hello, and welcome to the latest Newsletter from "Basics Bank"...

More Clients, more food, new referrers, new challenges, potential new "Basics Banks" around the city, a comprehensive report about our work in West Pilton, volunteers leaving and new ones arriving, speaking at churches, casting the vision: busy, busy, busy!

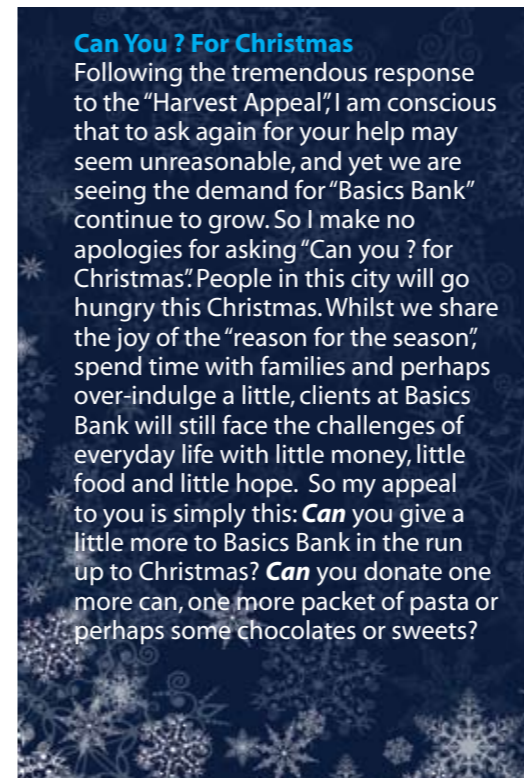
"Be still, and know that I am God" (Ps 46:10)

During the last 6 months or so, in the cacophony of anticipation of all that goes on, all the demands on my time, energy, skills, experience and gifting, The Lord has impressed this Scripture on my heart. As He draws us unto Himself, we can find rest even in the turmoil and challenges of the volume of just living! Out of this still time I have been challenged about who in our communities Basics Bank connects with. I'm not questioning what we do or why, just How! I always say that if we don't know the "Why" the "How" doesn't matter. And we know the WHY! We have a great team of referrers from many agencies but very few from the local church. It's through the vibrant local church that we can access the heart of our community, your community! As our clients find Jesus through Basics Bank, the local church is so vital in the discipleship of them, making our joy complete. So, with Advent coming ever closer, let's prepare our hearts to see God at work in our community in increasing measure, to His glory.

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him."

(Lam 3:22-24)

STEPHEN WRIGHT

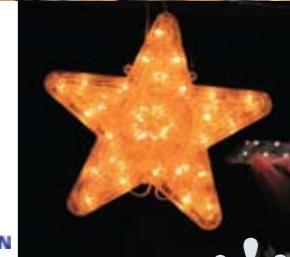


Can You? For Christmas

Following the tremendous response to the "Harvest Appeal", I am conscious that to ask again for your help may seem unreasonable, and yet we are seeing the demand for "Basics Bank" continue to grow. So I make no apologies for asking "Can you? for Christmas". People in this city will go hungry this Christmas. Whilst we share the joy of the "reason for the season", spend time with families and perhaps over-indulge a little, clients at Basics Bank will still face the challenges of everyday life with little money, little food and little hope. So my appeal to you is simply this: **Can** you give a little more to Basics Bank in the run up to Christmas? **Can** you donate one more can, one more packet of pasta or perhaps some chocolates or sweets?



*May the glory of God
and the salvation of souls be
your chief - your only end*



EDINBURGH CITY MISSION

Newsletter December 2011



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Let it be

No, I'm not going to burst into song but these three words are part of one of the most significant verses of Scripture, particularly as we move towards Christmas. We read in Luke's Gospel that the angel Gabriel visited Mary to tell her about being chosen to give birth to the son of God, the Messiah. The Message translation puts her response this way 'And Mary said, "Yes, I see it all now: I'm the Lord's maid, ready to serve. **Let it be** with me just as you say" Then the angel left her.' This speaks to me of total submission to God, amazing faith in God and a unique call.

As I look at where we are as a Mission, I see that we are in the midst of change with a number of unanswered questions. There are areas of ministry that we will be developing over the next wee while. As I look at all we do as a Mission I am reminded of the selfless dedication of our staff and volunteers. I rejoice in the fact that we have one part-time staff member who comes in and works another day for nothing. We have missionaries who are working at home to develop their ministry. We have staff members who are constantly looking at how their ministry can be developed. Not to mention the over one hundred volunteers that are spread throughout our ministries – we could not function without these selfless people. I regard it an honour and privilege to work alongside these people. In them I see the attributes mentioned above about Mary. Our people seek to submit to God's will on a daily basis and exercise great faith, particularly at the beginning of this year when we didn't have enough money to pay salaries, but we were able to give thanks as God provided on a daily basis and our faith was built up. We all want to continue to prove God's goodness as we grow in faith and as we show in our lives that our God can do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine.

My prayer for the Mission and the individual missionaries as we move out of one year into the New Year is that we would hold fast to the attitude of Mary and that we would daily say "Let it be". Let it be your will, Lord, that is done in us, with us and through us. Let it be you, Lord, that we trust in first and not try to work things out ourselves. Let it be you, Lord, who is glorified in all that we do. Finally, let it be that many people become Christ followers through the work of the Mission.

Have a blessed Christmas and a faith full year in 2012.

Lawrie Hudson



My name is Christina Bielska; I was born in Edinburgh and for majority of my life grew up in Dalkeith. I am from a completely non-Christian family and was brought up in an environment where God was very rarely thought about or mentioned. However, by God's grace at the age of 11, I was sent to the local Roman Catholic school and was taught by a lady who seemed to know and love the Lord. This, I believe is when the imperishable seed of God's Word was planted; although it was only after many years of godless, hedonistic living, aged 24, that the Holy Spirit opened my eyes to see my sins had separated me from God and that I was heading for hell. For the first time in my life I understood and was overwhelmed by the love of God that had sent Christ to the cross to die for my sins so I might be forgiven, and have peace with God.



Immediately I had a desire to share the Good News of the Lord Jesus Christ. This initially took the form of feeding the homeless, street evangelism and youth work. I always felt that one day I would work in Christian ministry, an aspiration that turned into a reality when God opened the door to work with Edinburgh City Mission as an evangelist to students, and with Billy in the gospel group.

For two days a week, come rain or shine, Tom Hunter (a worker with international students) and I stand outside Edinburgh University Library and serve hot drinks with a table filled with free Christian literature. It's not particularly cool or sophisticated but by God's grace it's effective. Much literature is taken and many fruitful conversations are had. Even in the short time I've been involved in this ministry there seems to be a growing spiritual hunger amongst the students. Many seem increasingly disillusioned with the materialistic and naturalistic world views and are willing to listen and consider the Christian worldview and the Christ who is central. We have become part of the furniture, with regulars coming back week after week, enabling us to build relationships. One 'atheist' student even helps us set up the table and another girl told us that she literally thanks God every time she sees us. The Lord seems to be drawing people to the table that are often religious but are relying on their own righteousness, or have no sense of peace with God. We thank God for the privilege of being able to explain to them the true way of salvation and all that Christ purchased for them in the finished work of the cross. The simple act of serving teas and coffees often leads to students sharing with us the deep struggles they are having in their personal lives. Despite the majority of them being from 'well-off' backgrounds many seem very needy and emotionally troubled.

There has also been a marked increase in the number of Chinese students this year. The spiritual openness and curiosity amongst the Chinese is amazing, with many articulating a desire to do more studies and find out more about Christianity. They are very zealous about their studies and keep a tight schedule, so we are praying their interest in Christ will turn into a reality, perhaps in the form of Bible studies. We praise and thank God for all that he is doing through this ministry despite our failings and insufficiency. We feel assured that as he plants the seed, by his amazing grace, he will give the increase and glorify his name in Edinburgh.

CHRISTINA BIELSKA

The Christian Heritage Centre

It seems a while since the busy summer days of the Christian Heritage Centre. Again this year we had over 10,000 visitors from all over the world, as well as a growing number of locals. God was working in our midst drawing all sorts of people in. A Chinese student heard a brief outline of the spiritual history here, and when asked whether she had ever been to church she replied that she had been once in London, but that she wanted to know how to become a Christian. The gospel was explained to her clearly twice and then she said she wanted to give her life to Christ, which she did with joy. She is now back in China and has connected with a Christian family there.



During the season six professed faith in Christ and many hundreds heard the gospel. Over 5,000 pieces of gospel literature were taken by people in the centre in many languages; we pray that God will use his written Word to bring people to himself.

This year we had tour guides from China, Taiwan, Russia and other places who were excited about what we were doing even though most of them were not Christians! They requested the translated versions of our exhibition so that they could learn the notes and bring tour groups back next year to learn about Christianity. On another occasion a Korean company filmed me outside St Giles where I spoke about the Reformation and the need of a return to the Bible and Christ. This documentary will be sent all over South Korea with the prayer that God will use it to revive his Church.

The Celtic Tour

Over 1,000 people came on the tour this season and two that we know of committed their lives to Christ through it. God uses this street outreach in extraordinary ways to bring the gospel to many and stir up the Christians. Again we heard from all sorts of people that this tour is one of the best on the Royal Mile. This year has seen an answer to prayer, for we now have a junior Cuthbert tour guide called Yorick, who started leading groups in September and does a great job.

PAUL JAMES-GRIFFITHS