

# Greyfriars Gazette

The newsletter of Greyfriars Parish Church, Lanark

[www.lanarkgreyfriars.com](http://www.lanarkgreyfriars.com)

October 2016

## This ...



Well now, we face a much more serious crisis. We simply do not have enough money to continue as a church. We are not talking in general terms, we are talking in reality. We simply do not have enough money to continue.

So, we have a decision to make. If we feel the work of Greyfriars has reached an end, then fine, we can look at how we close the church, and our congregation down. We can all move to other churches to worship and serve. I would look for another church to minister.

However, if we feel that Greyfriars still has work to do in our community, still has a place to share the gospel of Jesus and his love with our friends and neighbours, work with the children and young people in Lanark through the schools and our holiday clubs, support older people through our guild, sewing club and friendship visits, that we still have something unique to offer in our style of worship, then we need to

Dear friends,

I write in my first magazine since returning as minister of Greyfriars following my period of absence due to my illness. May I take this opportunity to thank you for all of your kind wishes, and prayers. I still have a long way to go but have great support from Pauline and the girls, along with our church family.

The church family at Greyfriars is always, and has always been, wonderful at supporting those who need friendship, who are facing times of trouble, or are experiencing a crisis in their life.

As a church, Greyfriars, we, are facing a crisis. For many years we have heard subsequent treasurers telling us the message that we do not have enough money for that year. Each time, we have rallied and been able to meet our demands ... almost.

## or This ...



# You need to help us decide.

do something about this crisis ... and quickly.

I feel that there is still work for us to do here in Lanark, as the church family at Greyfriars. I feel passionately that with all of the outreach in which we are engaged, God is at work in us, and through us.

For generations we have, as a church family, provided a place for the community to gather, to worship, to say goodbye to loved ones, to welcome new children, to celebrate love, to cry together in times of tragedy and laugh together in times of joy.

Think of the amount of groups that call Greyfriars 'home'. We have so many organisations who use our hall, and significantly contribute to our running costs. Without these, and the church office providing printing support for groups we simply would not have survived the last few years.

We recently celebrated the 21st

anniversary of Greyfriars, but our heritage goes much, much further back.

I don't feel that God is finished with Greyfriars yet. I sense that God is wanting us to look at ourselves, each and every one of us, and answer his call to service and action.

I feel that God is inviting each one of us to step up to the plate, and tell the world that we are part of his family here in Greyfriars.

Part of that is through getting involved in the events that we offer, and part of it is contributing what we can, and what we are able, to ensure that Greyfriars remains open for the foreseeable future, and continues to be a beacon of light in our community.

Almost ten years ago, I heard a call from God when I was minister in the Douglas Valley. That call led me to be minister of Greyfriars and for you, the church family, asking me to lead you as

your minister and pastor.

At that time I felt that God was calling me to lead Greyfriars into becoming an inclusive, relevant, loving and meaningful Christian community that reached out to Lanark and beyond. I still believe in that call from God, and don't think the work is yet completed.

Please pray for our church, and pray for your response to our crisis. We need all of our members and friends to pull together and ensure that Greyfriars continues to remain open, and remain a place of sanctuary and welcome for our community.

We are still Greyfriars church family.

Your minister and friend.



# The Challenge facing Greyfriars

## CURRENT POSITION

Our Church finances are now in a critical state.

As reported in our 2015 Annual Review we ran a deficit in 2015 which meant we needed to use past reserves to cover our operating costs.

The situation has worsened in the first half of 2016 and a deficit of £10,597 has been incurred in the period.

Voluntary givings in 2016 have continued to decline and less income has come in from the use of our premises and printing facilities.

This trend is extremely concerning and the figures below show the extent of the reduction in income—

### Total income

- First half 2014 £58,687
- First half 2015 £53,574
- First half 2016 £43,911

A decline of 25% in the period.

Our reserves have badly affected by these lower income levels and have declined as below—

### Unrestricted reserves

- 31/12/14 £32,587
- 31/12/15 £25,654
- 30/6/16 £15,057

In other words they have reduced by more than 50% in the period.

The effect of all this on our bank

balance is very serious with the balance at the low point in the monthly cycle being down to £4/5,000.

Our weekly running costs are around £2,000 of which £1,000 goes to Church of Scotland for our Ministries and Mission allocation.. Most of this is to cover the cost of our local ministry with a contribution to the wider work of the church also being included. The balance of our spending is for day to day running costs of which the main items are Fabric maintenance, energy bills and office costs.

In recent weeks we have had to delay some payments as we had insufficient funds in the bank.

## PROPOSED ACTION AND APPEAL TO CONGREGATION

The Kirk Session is most concerned about our situation and has given the matter serious consideration.

The following actions were decided upon by the Session at a recent meeting—

1. Make the congregation fully aware of the crisis—this is the purpose of the communication .
2. Arrange for a Gift Day to take place on Sunday 30th October 2016 at which everyone concerned with Greyfriars will be asked to make a "one-off" donation at whatever level they can afford.

3. A Stewardship campaign will be organised for the Spring of 2017. A committee will be formed immediately and planning and preparation put in place.
4. Fundraising activities will be planned and members of the congregation will be appealed to for help.

## SO WHAT NOW?

While we must continue to boost income from all sources including use of premises, printing and all forms of Fundraising the only sure way of stabilising our church finances is to increase our regular givings from all members preferably through the Gift Aid scheme if appropriate.

In round terms we need an increase of 25% on average across

all members just to get back to covering our costs on an ongoing basis. In the longer term we need to improve further on that to rebuild our reserves.

It is recognised that in these difficult economic times this presents a major challenge. Nevertheless we need to rise to this challenge if we want to keep the doors at Greyfriars open and allow us to continue the good works both within our church and in the wider communities.

# The Last Leaf

a short story by O. Henry

Many artists lived in the Greenwich Village area of New York. Two young women named Sue and Johnsy shared a studio apartment at the top of a three-story building. Johnsy's real name was Joanna.

In November, a cold, unseen stranger came to visit the city. This disease, pneumonia, killed many people. Johnsy lay on her bed, hardly moving. She looked through the small window. She could see the side of the brick house next to her building.

One morning, a doctor examined Johnsy and took her temperature. Then he spoke with Sue in another room.

"She has one chance in -- let us say ten," he said. "And that chance is for her to want to live. Your friend has made up her mind that she is not going to get well. Has she anything on her mind?"

"She -- she wanted to paint the Bay of Naples in Italy some day," said Sue.

"Paint?" said the doctor. "Bosh! Has she anything on her mind worth thinking twice -- a man for example?"

"A man?" said Sue. "Is a man worth -- but, no, doctor; there is nothing of the kind."

"I will do all that science can do," said the doctor.

"But whenever my patient begins to count the carriages at her funeral, I take away fifty percent from the curative power of medicines."

After the doctor had gone, Sue went into the workroom and cried. Then she went to Johnsy's room with her drawing board, whistling ragtime.

Johnsy lay with her face toward the window. Sue

stopped whistling, thinking she was asleep. She began making a pen and ink drawing for a story in a magazine. Young artists must work their way to "Art" by making pictures for magazine stories. Sue heard a low sound, several times repeated. She went quickly to the bedside.

Johnsy's eyes were open wide. She was looking out the window and counting -- counting backward. "Twelve," she said, and a little later "eleven"; and then "ten" and "nine;" and then "eight" and "seven," almost together.

Sue looked out the window. What was there to count? There was only an empty yard and the blank side of the house seven meters away. An old ivy vine, going bad at the roots, climbed half way up the wall. The cold breath of autumn had stricken leaves from the plant until its branches, almost bare, hung on the bricks.

"What is it, dear?" asked Sue.

"Six," said Johnsy, quietly. "They're falling faster now. Three days ago there were almost a hundred. It made my head hurt to count them. But now it's easy. There goes another one. There are only five left now."

"Five what, dear?" asked Sue.

"Leaves. On the plant. When the last one falls I must go, too. I've known that for three days. Didn't the doctor tell you?"

"Oh, I never heard of such a thing," said Sue. "What have old ivy leaves to do with your getting well? And you used to love that vine. Don't be silly. Why, the doctor told me this morning that your chances for getting well real soon were -- let's see exactly what he said -- he said the chances were ten to one! Try to eat some soup now. And, let me go back to my drawing, so I can sell it to the magazine and buy food and wine for us."

"You needn't get any more wine," said Johnsy, keeping her eyes fixed out the window. "There goes another one. No, I don't want any soup. That leaves just four. I want to see the last one fall before it gets dark. Then I'll go, too."

"Johnsy, dear," said Sue, "will you promise

# Gift Day

On 30th October the Kirk Session invite every member and friend of Greyfriars to bring an extra one off gift, of whatever you can afford, to help with the immediate funding crisis.

Please pray about your response. We really do need a significant amount to plug the funding hole and keep Greyfriars open. The only funding we receive is from our members.

With this magazine you should have an envelope. Please put your donation in the envelope and bring it to church on 30th October or hand it in to the church office.

If you are a UK tax payer, please tick the Gift Aid box. All envelopes will be treated in the strictest confidence and will be opened by the Treasurer and treated confidentially.

Please give what you can. Thank you

## Greyfriars Worship

Worship is at the heart of all that we do in Greyfriars. There are many opportunities to come together for worship and we hope to be able to welcome you to some or all of our services.

### October

16th	11am	Morning Worship
23rd	11am	Morning Worship
30th	9:30am	Traditional Communion Service
	11am	Morning Worship

### November

6th	11am	Morning Worship
13th	10:30am	Joint Service of Remembrance in St. Nicholas Church
20th	11am	Morning Worship
27th	9:30am	Traditional Communion Service
	11am	Morning Worship

### December

4th	11am	Sacrament of Holy Communion and Children's Gift Service
11th	11am	Morning Worship

Remember that we want as many people as possible to be a part of our worship at Greyfriars. If you cannot attend our services you can watch it live, or when convenient, on the church website.

We look forward to worshipping with you in Greyfriars.



## ***The Last Leaf (contd.)***

me to keep your eyes closed, and not look out the window until I am done working? I must hand those drawings in by tomorrow."

"Tell me as soon as you have finished," said Johnsy, closing her eyes and lying white and still as a fallen statue. "I want to see the last one fall. I'm tired of waiting. I'm tired of thinking. I want to turn loose my hold on everything, and go sailing down, down, just like one of those poor, tired leaves."

"Try to sleep," said Sue. "I must call Mister Behrman up to be my model for my drawing of an old miner. Don't try to move until I come back."

Old Behrman was a painter who lived on the ground floor of the apartment building. Behrman was a failure in art. For years, he had always been planning to paint a work of art, but had never yet begun it. He earned a little money by serving as a model to artists who could not pay for a professional model. He was a fierce, little, old man who protected the two young women in the studio apartment above him.

Sue found Behrman in his room. In one area was a blank canvas that had been waiting twenty-five years for the first line of paint. Sue told him about Johnsy and how she feared that her friend would float away like a leaf.

Old Behrman was angered at such an idea. "Are there people in the world with the foolishness to die because leaves drop off a vine? Why do you let that silly business come in her brain?"

"She is very sick and weak," said Sue, "and the disease has left her mind full of strange ideas."

"This is not any place in which one so good as Miss Johnsy shall lie sick," yelled Behrman. "Some day I will paint a masterpiece, and we shall all go away."

Johnsy was sleeping when they went upstairs. Sue pulled the shade down to cover the window. She and Behrman

went into the other room. They looked out a window fearfully at the ivy vine. Then they looked at each other without speaking. A cold rain was falling, mixed with snow. Behrman sat and posed as the miner.

The next morning, Sue awoke after an hour's sleep. She found Johnsy with wide-open eyes staring at the covered window.

"Pull up the shade; I want to see," she ordered, quietly.

Sue obeyed.

After the beating rain and fierce wind that blew through the night, there yet stood against the wall one ivy leaf. It was the last one on the vine. It was still dark green at the centre. But its edges were coloured with the yellow. It hung bravely from the branch about seven meters above the ground.

"It is the last one," said Johnsy. "I thought it would surely fall during the night. I heard the wind. It will fall today and I shall die at the same time."

"Dear, dear!" said Sue, leaning her worn face down toward the bed. "Think of me, if you won't think of yourself. What would I do?"

But Johnsy did not answer.

The next morning, when it was light, Johnsy demanded that the window shade be raised. The ivy leaf was still there. Johnsy lay for a long time, looking at it. And then she called to Sue, who was preparing chicken soup.

"I've been a bad girl," said Johnsy. "Something has made that last leaf stay there to show me how bad I was. It is wrong to want to die. You may bring me a little soup now."

An hour later she said: "Someday I hope to paint the Bay of Naples."

Later in the day, the doctor came, and Sue talked to him in the hallway.

"Even chances," said the doctor. "With good care, you'll win. And now I must see another case I have in your building. Behrman, his name is -- some

kind of an artist, I believe. Pneumonia, too. He is an old, weak man and his case is severe. There is no hope for him; but he goes to the hospital today to ease his pain."

The next day, the doctor said to Sue: "She's out of danger. You won. Nutrition and care now -- that's all."

Later that day, Sue came to the bed where Johnsy lay, and put one arm around her.

"I have something to tell you, white mouse," she said. "Mister Behrman died of pneumonia today in the hospital. He was sick only two days. They found him the morning of the first day in his room downstairs helpless with pain. His shoes and clothing were completely wet and icy cold. They could not imagine where he had been on such a terrible night.

And then they found a lantern, still lighted. And they found a ladder that had been moved from its place. And art supplies and a painting board with green and yellow colours mixed on it.

And look out the window, dear, at the last ivy leaf on the wall. Didn't you wonder why it never moved when the wind blew? Ah, darling, it is Behrman's masterpiece -- he painted it there the night that the last leaf fell."

*In Greyfriars, we can be focussed on waiting for the last leaf to fall, or we can have hope that God will do something extraordinary in our midst and allow us to focus on the leaf that remains and move forward.*

*The choice is ours.*

*Pray.*

*Pray.*

*Pray.*

*Hope.*

*Hope.*

*Hope.*

*God is alive within our midst.*

*Let us allow him to do the extraordinary with Greyfriars.*

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For all other office bearers or enquiries, please contact the church office

## **Deadline**

Material for the next edition of the *Greyfriars Gazette*, to be published in mid November, should be passed to the church office, or emailed to magazine@lanarkgreyfriars.com by Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at the latest.