Dear friends,

I thought that I would take the opportunity in this edition of Greyfriars Gazette to show everyone our new church family photograph that was taken last month. One of our elders, Ewan Easton, kindly brought his camera to capture in a picture, all who joined in worship that day. We really are a vibrant, friendly, mixed bunch of people (ages I mean!).

And isn’t that what makes a family? A group of people who come together due to a common bond, in our case the church, to share together, grow together and, in the case of a church family, serve together.

As we look around, we see different opportunities within our community for serving God. But what does it mean to serve God? Well, it means that we work together, as a family, to bring about God’s kingdom values in our community. Values of love, acceptance, inclusion, welcome, hospitality, equality are some of what God calls us to develop.

In this edition of Greyfriars Gazette you will read about the brilliant work some of our members are involved in with the younger members of our community. Each year a Holiday Club is run for children, a club that demonstrates to them, and encourages them to explore for themselves, some of the Kingdom values of God.

Too often in the community, or in the media, we hear that the church does not have a place in society anymore. Really? I would beg to differ. The church, through the members of our church family, are involved in practically every organisation and group within the community. Now, we don’t evangelise or bible bash at these groups, but we do encourage others to think about God’s kingdom values when they plan their work. What does this do for the poorest in our community? How can we include those who do not feel included?

It is a privilege to be the minister of Greyfriars. It is a dynamic, friendly, energised family of God, where all are welcomed, all are loved, and all are encouraged to play their part. Yes, including you. So what can you do to help us? What can you do to develop our work? Can you pray, get involved, give financially? We all have a part to play in the Greyfriars family ... bringing God into the heart of Lanark.

Easter Time

’Twas the blackest of days that Friday When they nailed Him to the cross His friends all huddled together Unable to bear their loss.

But then came that first Easter morning When their fears and doubts all fled ‘Twas then an angel told them “He is risen from the dead.”

And still we celebrate Easter For the joy and hope it brings And we all gather together To sing praises to our King

Elspeth Riddet
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.

May
- 24th 11am  Morning Worship
- 31st  11am  Morning Worship with Holy Communion

June
- 7th  10:30am  Joint Morning Worship in St. Nicholas Church
- 12noon  Kirkin’ of the Lord Cornet in St. Nicholas
- 14th  11am  Morning Worship
- 21st  11am  Children’s and Young People’s Recognition Service
- 28th  10:30am  Open Air Ecumenical Service at Cleghorn Mains

July
- 5th  10:30am  Joint Morning Worship in St. Nicholas Church
- 12th  10:30am  Joint Morning Worship in St. Nicholas Church
- 19th  10:30am  Joint Morning Worship in Greyfriars Church
- 26th  10:30am  Joint Morning Worship in Greyfriars Church

August
- 2nd  10:30am  Ecumenical Morning Worship in Greyfriars
- 9th  11am  Back to School Sunday
- 16th  11am  Morning Worship
- 23rd  11am  Morning Worship
- 30th  9:30am  Traditional Communion Service
- 11am  Morning Worship

September
- 6th  11am  Morning Worship with Holy Communion
- 13th  11am  Morning Worship
- 20th  11am  Morning Worship
- 27th  9:30am  Traditional Communion Service
- 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.

Resources Action Group Update

As you will be aware from your copy of Greyfriars 2014 Annual Report and the Stated Annual Meeting we managed to earn a modest surplus of income over expenditure last year. It is most important that we sustain this position year on year and it has to be noted that without a most generous donation of £8,750 including gift aid recovery last year we would again have been in deficit.

We also had most successful fundraising activities which raised almost £7000. In addition income from the use of our premises by outside parties and printing facilities increased significantly to over £19,000. These other sources of income are most welcome and we are most grateful to everyone who supported them in whatever way.

The key however to our long term financial stability is through regular givings from our members and last year there was a slight decline from this part of our income.

We appreciate that these are very difficult economic times for some of our members but we appeal to those who are able to increase their level of givings even if only by a modest amount.

Once again we would also ask everyone who pays tax to use the gift aid scheme as this gives the church an additional 25% on top of your donation at no cost to the individual. If you need any information about gift aid please talk to Louise Gemmell the gift aid convener or to Graham Chapman or Jack Lumsden.

Our property team continue to organise regular maintenance of our property and as part of this activity a team of volunteers will be painting interior parts of the Manse in early July. If you would like to help please give your name to Robert McMillan. You may have noticed that the dishwasher had to be replaced recently and we are very grateful to the Wrigglers group who kindly gave a donation to pay for the new machine.

We are also most grateful to the Guild for their donation of £500 to the church.

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Lenten Lunches 2015

Marcella McLennan

Lanark Christian Aid Council would like to thank the members of Greyfriars who were involved in the recent series of Lenten Lunches as helpers, donors of soup and other materials or as customers. A total of £1,597 was raised from the efforts of all the churches and customers with or without church connections, for the worldwide work of Christian Aid, with Gift Aid tax reclaimed still to be added. This total was an increase on last year.

Easy Yoghurt Cake
- 1 carton (small) any flavour yoghurt
- 1 carton castor sugar
- 1 egg
- ½ carton vegetable oil
- 1½ cartons self raising flour

Put yoghurt in bowl. Using the carton as a measure, add the rest of the ingredients.
Mix well. Put in loaf tin and bake at 190°C (gas 5) for 20 mins. Dust top with icing sugar when cool.

Carolyn’s Lemon Curd
- 2 lemons
- 2 cups sugar
- 1/4lb butter
- 2 or 3 eggs (beaten)
- Grate rind of 2 lemons.
- Squeeze juice.
- Put in pan with the rest of the ingredients.
- Stir over a slow heat.
- Simmer until thickened. (15mins approx.)
- Cool and put in jars. Curd will thicken more as it cools.
It was a late start to our Guild in 2015. Both of our January meetings had to be cancelled because of bad weather. However we did get going in May, if a bit slowly at first. But...a demonstration by the paramedics from Douglas changed all that. They were excellent and absolutely everyone went home with a new confidence in their ability to cope in an emergency and the knowledge that this very able team are ready and willing to help....just dial 999 !

In March we were guests of St Nicholas Guild. T’was a splendid evening. Bill Love singing and telling stories, and ....leading our singing.....followed by a lovely supper from our friends at the Guild up the road. How lucky were all of us?

Our AGM was on 25th March and we welcomed Caroline Brown to our committee and we hope she will enjoy working with us. Later the same evening we had an Easter Bonnet competition. Jessie Holmes was the clear winner with three runners up. Pics are on the wall in the hall.

On Saturday 28th March we had a most successful Daffodil tea. Thanks go to everyone in The Guild, relatives and friends who worked so hard and to everyone who donated and supported us on the morning. It was a great team effort and we raised £810. Well done ! The money has been divided between our Church and the Guild projects. Every three years the Church of Scotland Guild selects six very worthwhile projects to support. This is the end of a 3 year phase and our Guild has donated to the final two on the list. As indicated in the previous magazine they are the Scottish Churches Housing action ‘Julius Project’ and as at 20/4/2015 it had received £109,475 and the World Mission Council’s ‘Out of Africa into Malta’ which had received £113,247 at the same date . The largest total nearly £140,000 has gone to the Crossreach programme ‘Heart for Art’...’ looking at art therapy in the care of those with dementia and offering sufferers and their carers support and advice from Crossreach staff.

All of the projects have received very substantial donations and a little update of good news...

During the E Bola crisis in Liberia, the kitchens in the ‘Mary’s Meals’ project had to be closed down . However they have recently reopened so we hope this will be a positive move for the children in this very poor country.

On 13th May we close this session with lunch at The Inn on the Loch......we’ll be back in September. Come and join us.

“There is no situation so chaotic that God cannot, from that situation, create something that is surpassingly good. He did it at the Creation. He did it at the Cross. He is doing it today.”

Handley C G Moule

(Submitted by Sue Crofton)
In each edition of Greyfriars Gazette we interview someone involved in the life of Greyfriars church family. This edition, we profile choir member, elder and resident poet, Elspeth Ridett.

Q. Tell me about your personal faith.

A. My faith is my rock. When I’m unhappy and distressed I pray and always get comfort. When times are hard and the way gets tough I pray and always get encouragement to keep going. When things are going well I pray and give thanks for all God’s goodness. Yes, I can truly say that my faith is my rock.

Q. What do you enjoy most about being part of the Greyfriars Family?

A. I enjoy the feeling of belonging. I love the friendliness of the congregation. The first Sunday I came back to Church after my cancer operation, when I walked in with the choir I felt myself engulfed in a great wave of love. It made me realise that I was truly home. It was wonderful.

Q. What part has faith played in shaping your life?

A. I try not to be too judgemental, try to see and understand the other’s point of view. I try to help others and appreciate their difficulties. I’m afraid I don’t always succeed.

Q. Tell me something about yourself that would surprise me.

A. I honestly can’t think of anything.

Q. When did you start singing and when did you join the Church choir?

A. I come from a family that used to gather round the piano and sing. I can’t remember a time when I didn’t sing. I sang in the school choir. We did Gilbert and Sullivan shows. I can’t remember when I joined the church choir. I do know it was in St. Kentigern’s.

Q. Do you have a favourite bible story and why.

A. I don’t really have a favourite. There are so many lovely stories in the Bible.

Q. What are your hobbies and pastimes?

A. I love doing cross-stitch and reading. I’m also addicted to crosswords, sudoku and quizzes, all very sedentary I’m afraid. I also like to go for walks.

Q. You have a talent for writing poetry. When did you start?

A. I think it all started when my sister and I used to write “poems” for Dad’s birthday. He never wanted a present as long as he got his poems. I think it all took off from there. (1950’s or 60’s)

We also asked Elspeth to write a poem to go along with the interview (which goes to the tune, “Daisy, Daisy”):

Elspeth! Elspeth!
Answer these questions do.
I want to make a
Little profile of you.
It won’t take more than a minute
To answer the questions in it.
So please complete
This question sheet.
It will tell us all about you.

Elspeth Ridett

Greyfriars Contributions

In 2015, Greyfriars Church made total contributions of £54,063 to the Ministries and Mission fund of the Church of Scotland. What does that mean? Where does it go?

Ministries (86%)
£46,494 of our total contribution will go towards the costs of providing over 1,000 ministers and other parish workers in communities throughout Scotland and in the Presbytery of England. This contribution also assists with the costs of recruitment and training. The 2015 cost of a parish minister at the top of the stipend scale is £41,048 (stipend plus employer’s national insurance and pension contributions). If a congregations contribution to Ministries is above this figure, then the church is meeting the full cost of your ministry and supporting other congregations. If it is less than £41,048, the congregation (or linked charge) is being supported by other congregations.

Mission (14%)
£7,569 of our total contribution will be used to support the Church’s work in: resourcing congregations for Christian education and outreach; providing social care services in Christ’s name to further the caring work of the Church to people in need; accompanying partners around the world on our shared Christian journey; contributing the Church’s opinion in public debate and on issues affecting Scotland and the World; providing central day-to-day service work in administrative, financial and legal matters; and in planning the General Assembly and ensuring the Moderator represents the Church.

As you will see, the contributions our church makes ensure a very diverse ministry is maintained and that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is shared in many ways and in many places.
It begins with a call for volunteers to help at the holiday club, and yes I volunteer again. Hope Hospital sounds very positive and should give us lots of opportunities to talk about helping and caring, and also dressing up as doctors and nurses (for some).

Thursday 19th March.
It’s the planning meeting at the manse. Looking around we see familiar faces from previous holiday clubs seeming fairly relaxed, teenage volunteers chatting happily, and some new volunteers staring anxiously at the 11 page document handed out by our leaders. Yes Bryan and Pauline Kerr, Scott and Helen Paget are assuring one and all that “it will be fine”.......and it will! In the usual Bryan Kerr fashion everything appears random, but is actually very, very well planned.

Black T shirts and hoodies, bearing the Hope Hospital logo, are available for volunteers to purchase! So let’s try to guess what size is going to fit and make you look gorgeous??? Anyone over the age of 21 will surely have to avoid all mirrors for the duration of the club!

Sunday 12th April.
It’s the day before the holiday club begins, and after a ‘shortish’ Morning Worship Service, it’s all hands on deck, as furniture is transported from the hall to the vestry to make way for Hope Hospital. Will it all fit in......chairs, tables, piano, popcorn machine, etc. etc.?........Yes it does!

Monday 13th April
And so it begins. Volunteers arrive at the hall at 9am, and although it’s a bit damp and chilly outside, Bryan is ready in holiday club mode, wearing his shorts. We revise the plan for Day 1, and at 9.55 the doors open. The children come streaming in, most are smiling, some of the first timers are a wee bit more tentative, but very soon are at home. The fun begins and we are singing, dancing, watching drama, jumping around, (this is tougher than I remember from last year, but then again, I am a year older). There’s lots of glitter, glue, clay, paint, sticking, cutting, creating, laughing, learning, and sharing. How good it is to be part of something so positive in our church, in our town.

At 12.15 parents arrive to collect their children, and watch us from the balcony as we sing our final songs and say a prayer together.

And so it goes on.........
Over the week we hear the stories Jacob and Esau, Joseph and his brothers, David, Ruth and Naomi, Esther Mordecai and the King, and from the New Testament, the Good Samaritan, Zacchaeus and more. And the children listen, most of the time, and enjoy making friends, and crafts to share with someone who is not at the holiday club.

And there is more fun in the afternoons with movies for children and parents every day. The tuck shop is a great success with popcorn and ‘brain lickers’ amongst the best sellers!

With 120 children registered, 80 plus attending daily, and more at the cinema, I think we can say it’s been a great holiday club! So if you feel you would like to be part of this lovely madness, you can.......no special skills are required......just the desire to have fun while serving God! See you next year at the holiday club.

The snowdrops are nearly past so this is a good time to lift and divide into smaller clumps for next year while still green.
Early daffodils are past so remember to nip the withered heads off, but never cut the leaves – these are needed to feed the bulbs for the following year. I used to pleat mine so they would look tidy but I can assure you since I stopped this practice I have an abundance of blooms every year – just give them a handful of bone meal and later on the spent leaves will turn brown – then you should be able to lift them.

How are your seeds coming along? I have had good results with Wallflower and Sweet William but the few bedding plants are very slow this year. The Wallflower and Sweet William will be planted out later in the season.

No doubt your thoughts will have turned to Lanimer Day and filling the tubs, planters and hanging baskets to make the place look colourful? Remember to keep them inside in until early June. I have a few planted which I put out after the frost lifts, then bring in around teatime – this hardens them off. The sensible thing is to leave them in their trays before planting – don’t be impatient like me! Once they are established in pots etc. a weekly feed of liquid potash in water will keep them going well into the autumn.

Now you have all that out the way, it’s time to enjoy it so get your seat out and relax!

Have a good Lanimers and I’ll be back in the autumn.

Happy Gardening!
The Amateur Gardener
An idea to help you pray

Think of a teaspoon which is abbreviated to tsp

T ... thanks
S ... sorry
P ... please

Start your prayer by saying thanks to God for the good things in your life.
Next say sorry for the wrong things you have done, or the good things you have forgotten to do.
After that ask God to please help your family and friends and pray for the things that concern you. Think of the places you are going today and the people you are going to meet. Remember them by name. Just talk to God like you would to a friend.

Know your oceans ...

With Summer just around the corner and perhaps some trips to the beach, here are 10 Ocean Facts, from "National Geographic Kids":

1. Around 70% of the Earth’s surface is covered by oceans.
2. The largest ocean on Earth is the Pacific Ocean, covering around 30% of the Earth’s surface.
3. The name ‘Pacific Ocean’ comes from the Latin name Tepre Pacificum, ‘peaceful sea’.
4. The deepest known area of the Earth’s oceans is known as the Mariana Trench. It’s deepest point measures 11km. That’s a long dive down!
5. The world’s oceans are home to incredible creatures that are masters of disguise!
6. The longest mountain range in the world is found under water. Stretching over 56,000km, the Mid-Oceanic Ridge is a mountain chain that runs along the centre of the ocean basins.
7. About 70% of the oxygen we breathe is produced by the oceans.
8. The sea is home to the world’s largest living structure - the Great Barrier Reef. Measuring around 2,600km, it can even be seen from the Moon!
9. We have only explored about 5% of the world’s oceans. There's a lot more to be discovered!
10. The sea can be described as the planet's mega museum. There are more artefacts and remnants of history in the ocean than in all of the world's museums combined!
Lawn Care
Alan Boyd

Spring has sprung (supposedly) and if you haven’t already started it’s time to get into the garden. One of the most basic things you can do to brighten up any garden is have a nicely groomed lawn. There’s are several simple things you can do to achieve this. If you haven’t already started in the garden then the first step is simple, cut your grass. Be careful though. If you haven’t cut it all winter and the recent sunshine has made it grow then don’t cut it too short to start off. This will make the grass go yellow, and while this will change back to green it still makes it a bit unsightly. Begin to lower the height of your mower after the first cut. If you have started and you’re looking for more ways to brighten up your lawn, another simple step is scarifying. This can be done by hand or by using a scarifying mower if you have one. Most people either have or can come by a scarifying rake, so this is the easiest way. Scarifying rakes cut into the surface of the grass and soil rather than across the top. This removes any dead grass and moss that shouldn’t be there, allowing more space for grass to thicken. These 2 simple processes will thicken. These 2 simple processes will give your grass a boost and, when the summer finally does arrive, the heat and sunshine will help it along nicely. If you have any severely bare patches on your lawn then these need to be seeded. Any good garden centre sells grass seed. There are also products which you can buy that have grass seed mixed with fertiliser and a soil/top dressing-style product. These are excellent if you’re looking for your patch repairs to regrow quicker.

If you’re like me and have a keen interest in gardening, then there are some fertilisers and products you can buy to boost your grass along even more. At this time of year, when removing moss and weeds, products that have a high iron content are advisable (iron may appear on the product label as the symbol ‘Fe’). The iron will kill moss and weeds, and these can then be removed gradually with your scarifying rake. Don’t be tempted to over feed with these products as you will simply be left with a black lawn that looks unsightly and will take a while to recover. As the moss continues to die and be removed, other products which have a high nitrogen content can be applied (nitrogen may appear on the product label as the symbol ‘N’). However, be advised that products with too high a nitrogen content should be avoided as it will boost your grass too much and you’ll be cutting your grass forever! Nitrogen helps with the actual growth of the grass, and greens up the leaf as well. The products you buy from garden centres, for example AfterCut or Evergreen, tend to have a combination of these 2 steps, so you can kill moss and green up your grass at the same time. The labels on these products are extremely easy to read and understand, so you’ll not get confused if you decide to adopt these products and techniques. One final thing to a neat and tidy lawn is neat and tidy edges. Hairy edges or edges that are uneven, or edges along flower beds that aren’t straight detract from the overall look of your lawn.

Greyfriars Fundraisers
Liz Ivison

Since the last issue, we have held a Chocolate Morning, it wasn’t as successful as last year, but the weather conspired against us, it was bitterly cold and wet. We decided to keep the hall set up till Sunday morning and invited the congregation to come through after the service and enjoy the remaining ‘goodies.’ This idea proved to be a resounding success and we raised well over £400.

Cathy Luke, a local artist who specializes in local scenes, kindly donated 2 of her pictures for us to do what we could to raise funds. So far they have simply been displayed during the service and 1 has already been sold. The remaining picture shows The Bloomgate from the crossing to The Cross, taking in Greyfriars. If you are interested in seeing or even buying the picture, contact the church office.

Unfortunately we have had to postpone our children’s Onesie Disco, but we will be organising a ‘Crazy Hair Disco’ for late August.

Our next ‘big event’ is a Champagne Afternoon Tea to be held on Saturday 23rd May from 2 till 4 in the church hall. We need everyone’s support in this so please try to do any of the following – spread the word, sell tickets, bake a cake or scones, make a financial donation to help pay for the wine. Tickets will cost £5 and will be available by the time this goes to press.

We are hoping to organise a flower festival from 10th to 13th September in the church. The theme will be ‘Ode to Autumn’. If you know of anyone who would like to ‘arrange a creation’ – we’ll need 10! Or are aware of anyone or any business who might be willing to sponsor an arrangement please contact Liz Ivison. We’re also planning to serve tea/coffee on the chancel and the arrangements will be raffled of at the end.

Shine, the youth theatre group will perform in the church on the 23rd October.

Champagne Afternoon Tea
Saturday 23rd May
2pm - 4pm
Greyfriars Parish Church
Bloomgate, Lanark
Tickets £5
available from
Liz Ivison 01555 661944 or
Church Office 01555 437050
Organised by Greyfriars Parish Church

May 2015
Over the past few months, young people from Greyfriars have been invited to investigate some of the secrets of the church. This course was a way to think about what the church thinks, believes & lives out and putting that in conversation with the young peoples thoughts and beliefs.

The intrepid explorers have covered topics such as, Get ready for Disappointment, What is God? What is church?, How do I understand suffering and injustice?, What is salvation and the final judgment of God?, How important are worship and prayer? And how can I live as a Christian?

There were various points that caught the attention of the group, one of which was thinking about how we think of God as gendered. We address God the Father as a male, but as a group we wondered if it was possible to also think of God as female. As part of this we considered this quote from the Scottish Episcopal Church. –

“God is above and beyond human gender. We are not saying God is not masculine. God is also feminine. The problem is trying to use human language to describe the indescribable.”

The joy of group was in challenging what we assume about God and what the church believes and starting to work this out for ourselves. It was about taking the faith of young people seriously and asking questions of this belief. That is a good thing and as such Secrets of the Church will return for new explorers to discover.

Several Greyfriars families are involved in offering accommodation to the children, others in organising meals, but we need you to come along to the concert. We promise you will not be disappointed. The choir are some of the happiest, most incredible children you could ever meet.

The choir are some of the happiest, most incredible children you could ever meet. Please come along, and encourage your family, friends and neighbours to join us as the Watoto choir entertain and speak to us on 27th May.

We are delighted to announce that the Watoto African Children’s Choir will be visiting Greyfriars on their UK Tour on Wednesday 27th May 2015. The concert will begin at 7pm and entry is free. There will be the opportunity to contribute to the work of Watoto through an offering which will be uplifted on the night.

Watoto Children’s Choir offers children who have lost their parents the chance to be educated, loved and cared for.

We hope you like the magazine’s new look and some of the new sections we have added. We would love to hear from you, so please let us know what you think.

If you have anything you would like us to add, for example, an article or information that you would like to share in a future issue, please contact any of the magazine editorial team of Kirsty Burns, Graham Chapman, Janella Glover, Carolyn Graham and Morag Kelso.

Perhaps you have a favourite bible story that you feel is very relevant to today’s trends, a favourite hymn that always lifts your spirits, a favourite gadget that you couldn’t live without (and maybe we shouldn’t be living without either!), an amazing fool-proof recipe, or an unused item at home that could possibly be put to good use in a new home? You gain more space and someone else gains a new toy! Tell us about it! Thank you in advance for any thoughts or input, which will be gratefully received.

You can email the team at magazine@lanarkgreyfriars.com

Tell us about it ...
It’s your magazine!

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You can email the team at magazine@lanarkgreyfriars.com or speak to any of us individually.

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