

Community Notes and News

Saturday 3 October 2020



The **Minister**, Richard Frazer, or **Associate Minister**, Ken Luscombe, are happy to speak to anyone to discuss any matter, whether you are a member or not, please contact either:

- Richard on [07715 069 041](tel:07715069041) or by email at minister@greyfriarskirk.com, or
- Ken on [07488 258 875](tel:07488258875) or by email at associateminister@greyfriarskirk.com.

This week's services

Sunday Service, 11am, 4 October - available at www.greyfriarskirk.com/online-services.

If you would like to join our weekly gatherings for conversation over a cup of tea after the service, please email Richard (above). Sunday services will continue online at present.

Midweek Prayers, 1:10pm, Thursday 8 October– this will take place at the Kirk once more. This short service provides space for reflection and thought, you are warmly welcome to join. Recordings are still being added to the website, later in the day, for those who wish to view from home.

Kirk Opening

The Kirk is open each **Thursday from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm** for visitors.

Do come and enjoy the beautiful space. Please check the website for latest information on the day of your visit. We will provide updates in this newsletter on future services and any additional opening times.

In-Person Sunday Service Resuming!

We are delighted to be able to hold in-person services again here in the Kirk, and are excited to welcome you back to the sanctuary. We want to assure you that your safety and the safety of our ministry team and staff is our top priority. Below, you will see that we have outlined the guidelines within some frequently asked questions about what being back at Greyfriars will look like during this unique time. To learn more about in-person services or to book in, visit www.greyfriarskirk.com/inperson.



In-Person Services FAQ's

- **Can I just turn up to a service as usual?**

No. We will require you to [book in advance](#). This will help us to keep within the limits for number of people allowed at each gathering.
- **Do I have to provide my contact details?**

Yes. We're required to maintain attendance records to assist in the Test and Protect scheme. Your details will be stored in accordance to our Privacy Policy which is available [here](#).
- **Will you be live-streaming these gatherings?**

Not at the moment. We'll still have our pre-recorded Sunday service each Sunday at 11am which you're welcome to join us for on our website at greyfriarskirk.com/online-services.
- **What time will the service start?**

Services will begin on Sundays in the Kirk at 11 am. We recommend arriving early.
- **How long will the services be?**

The gathering will be 45-50 minutes long.
- **Can I sit wherever I want?**

The Duty Elders or Beadle will show you to a seat when you arrive. Where reasonably possible, we ask that you remain seated during the gathering.
- **Can I sit with other people?**

To maintain physical distancing, we will seat people 2 metres apart. Where possible, we will aim to seat those in the same household together although this will not always be possible.
- **Has the building been cleaned?**

Yes. As well as having a deep clean before reopening, we have increased the amount of cleaning we are doing. Among other things, this involves wiping down all touch points between gatherings.
- **Can I bring my children?**

Yes, absolutely. Unfortunately, crèche services will not be available, but children are welcome at our services.
- **Will I have to wear a mask?**

Yes. The current Scottish Government guidance is for all congregation members to wear masks inside buildings. If you are exempt from wearing a mask because of a medical reason, please just make the Duty Elders or Beadle aware of this when you arrive.
- **Do I need to bring hand sanitiser?**

We will provide hand sanitiser at all entrances/exits to the church as well as at toilets. However, you're very welcome to bring your own as well.
- **Will we be allowed to sing?**

The current guidance is that there can be no congregational singing.
- **Will I be able to use the toilets?**

Yes, the toilets will be open for use. Only two individuals will be permitted in the ladies and gents toilet at a time.
- **Will there be an offering?**

If you would like to give financially, at the moment we'd prefer this to be done online. There is a tap-to-give £3 contactless point at the Kirk exit for in-person

giving. Feel free to "tap" as many times as you wish! There will also be an offering plate at the door. You can donate online by clicking [here](#). The headings refer to Greyfriars Outreach and Greyfriars 400, but all the money you give will be used to support Greyfriars Ministry.

- **Is there tea and coffee afterwards?**

No. Under the current guidelines we aren't able to serve tea/coffee/refreshments at any gathering.

- **Will there be time to chat to people at the end?**

To promote physical distancing, at the end of the gathering, people sitting closest to the exit will be asked to leave first. As per Presbytery and Scottish Government guidelines, we also remind you that any gathering outside the church must be limited to a maximum of 6 people from not more than two households. Please disperse quickly after the service ends. If you would like to talk to another household within the legal limits, it would be best for you to do so away from the church, to maintain safe physical distancing for all.

Ready to sign up for services? Book your place at <http://bit.ly/greyfriarsinperson>.

St John's Edinburgh Creationtide Fair

The St John's Creationtide Fair will take place online this year and everyone from all churches and none are very welcome to attend. There will be a chance to hear from virtual stallholders about their projects, and to discuss this year's theme of Nature and Wellbeing with the experts.

The online fair is at 7.30 pm on Monday 5 October. To book and to receive joining instructions, please email leanormharris@gmail.com.



All Saints Day Service

As we begin to transition to the autumn season, do make plans to join us for our online for our All Saints Day service on the 1st of November at 6 pm. This will be a time to remember those that we have lost in the course of this year. For more information, please watch this space, as well as our social media.



Radical Welcome Course: Thursdays in November

As congregations and community centres, we want to be places of hospitality and sanctuary. We want to be open for all. How can we go beyond being friendly, beyond being inclusive, to

becoming radically welcoming? In four evening sessions on the 5, 12, 19 and 26 November from 8-9 pm we will:

- look at the history of our congregations and community
- reflect on our personal experiences of being excluded but also welcomed
- ask what kind of congregation and community we want to be
- challenge ourselves by aiming to become a radically welcoming place that inspires, empowers and blesses the people around us

Please come and be part of this journey. To receive the Zoom invitation with the link please email aross@churchofscotland.org.uk.

Donations

With the church building closed to outside activity we are totally dependent on the generous financial support of our members, regular attenders, online visitors and friends.

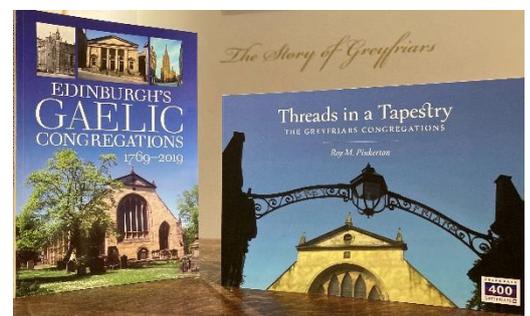
As we cannot circulate the usual offering plate, the online alternative is through this link: www.paypal.me/greyfriars400. Although headings refer to Greyfriars 400 and Outreach, donations will be used for the same general Greyfriars Kirk purposes as regular offerings; ministry, the Kirk building and staff. Many thanks.

Helping the Kirk with Amazon Smile

Operations Manager Steve also suggests: "if you do are using AMAZON please can you pay via AMAZON SMILE? This is their way of giving a proportion of your purchase amount back to your CHOSEN CHARITY. Again, you can help the Kirk this way without any monetary impact on your bank balance! All you need to do is quote Greyfriars Kirk's Charity number which is SC003761."

Come and Visit the Shop

One of our most special items in the shop are a set of books by our own congregant, Roy Pinkerton. *Thread in a Tapestry* and *Edinburgh's Gaelic Congregations* tell the story of our Kirk from a variety of perspectives. Would you like your own copy? Stop by the Kirk shop on Thursdays between 11 am and 4 pm—we would love to say hello!



Study Service has re-started: Sundays at 7pm

The Study Service topic for Sunday is CAN WE KNOW OUR SELF-IDENTITY? In an age when we are so often encouraged to look 'within ourselves' to 'find our true self', we will be considering the view that we cannot know our self-identity. Looking at some biblical passages and putting

together clues that they may give, together with the insights of systematic theology and philosophy, we will examine the argument that in the nature of the case we cannot actually know our own self-identity and only God does. The passages we will look at are Psalms 14 and 139, Jeremiah 1 (the call of Jeremiah to be a prophet), Romans 14 (especially 4-12)

The argument is that just as we cannot see our own faces because they are ours and we necessarily look out from them, not at them, so analogously we cannot know our own self-identity. We can of course know our own name and do, and we can and should come to understand and know ourselves more faithfully and truly. But because we ourselves are the very instrument we use to see and know, we cannot use that instrument to know ourselves the way we know what is not ourselves. A telescope cannot be used to look at itself!! Only another telescope, or something else, can do that.

This leads to the crucial points that:

(1) we are made to look outwards and only find our identity (without knowing it ourselves) by looking outwards and living for God and others.

(2) We are incredibly complex beings and in the very nature of the case don't know and cannot consciously know all that we are. This is because all the skills that we develop and all that we learn become part of our very being and are then "tacit" not conscious. The more skills and knowledge that we learn and integrate into ourselves such that they become tacit, the more we are able to continue looking outwards to consciously gain new knowledge and skills, but even then a great deal of continued learning is actually tacit, for we pick all sorts of skills tacitly without knowing precisely how we do it, just like learning to walk or ride a bike.

(3) We can know ourselves only by using what is not ourselves to tell us about ourselves, e.g. looking in a mirror, running into a brick wall to discover we are soft and fragile, learning from others how they see us, etc.

(4) A further point is that because we are often contradictory, inconsistent beings, pulled in different directions, there is no one whole self for us to know.

In the light of all this, the argument that ultimately only God knows our identity has much to commend it. It is certainly immensely liberating to find freedom from ourselves, knowing we are safe in the hands of God, that the God who knows our innermost thoughts before we utter them, is the God who "loves us more than he loves himself". We can forget about ourselves, knowing that we are forgiven, and in forgetting about ourselves we are freed to look outward to God and others.

It is above all the love of God for each one of us, augmented of course by the love and esteem of others for us, that gives us our identity and sense of worth. Our identity as such remains unknown to us, but it is safe in the hands of God. Just as our life is hidden in Christ in God (Colossians 3.3) so is our identity, but it is the fact that God, who knows all about us, loves us more than he loves himself, it is this that really frees us from ourselves. When our identity is known and hidden in God, for it is then that we are actually freed to begin to become more of who we are in Christ, and thereby more of a true, and not a split, self.

Interested in joining this special gathering? Please get in touch to find out more:
www.greyfriarskirk.com/get-in-touch.

Pastoral Care at Greyfriars Kirk

The Kirk's pastoral volunteers enjoy staying in touch with many in the congregation and community. If you would like a chat yourself, please contact Ken Luscombe (contact details at the top of this newsletter). Friendly ears and warm conversation awaits anyone who would like this, at any time throughout the year.

If you would like to send in any comments, ideas, requests or queries, please email the office at communications@greyfriarskirk.com. Any thoughts, large or small, very welcome.