

Christmas 2008

spire

spire provides news about the Church with the spire in the Strand. It is delivered by members of the Church.

news from Dawlish United Reformed Church

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Christmas Day Dinner

Hardly was last year's Christmas Day dinner over and some were booking in for this year. "It was wonderful," said one 93 year old, "lovely food and good company." The lunch is open to



Father Christmas arrives with gifts

those on their own (singles or couples), and it is much appreciated by those who do not want loud noise and too much activity. It starts at noon; there is the traditional Christmas meal and a chance to chat before a visit from Father Christmas. Then home in time to watch the Queen at 3.00. Lifts to and from the church are arranged. The dinner is by invitation only so that we know the numbers to cater for. If you would like to come or you know someone who might like to come, give Revd Roger Whitehead a ring on 889 098. We promise a really good time.

ANYONE FOR A SWIM ON BOXING DAY?

It is not everyone's idea of fun, but four keen people are swimming off Dawlish beach at 10am on Boxing Day to raise money for the Church's refurbishment appeal. June Wilson (pictured here emerging from the water last time she did it) has no doubts about it. "It's cold, it's exhilarating and it does raise money. I hope others will join us to support the work." For further information contact 88 90 98. And come to support the swimmers on the day.



Dress up for Crib Service



At 4 pm on Christmas Eve we hold a 30 minute Crib Service mainly for the under 7s and their parents (and grandparents). If possible we want children to come dressed as shepherds or

angels to take part in the tableau. We sing traditional well known Christmas carols and re-enact the Christmas story with the children. It's great fun and we hope to see you!

CHURCH GETS HUGE FINANCIAL BOOST

To encourage the church to raise money, Dawlish URC has been told that if it raises £25,000 by Easter 2009 it will be given an additional £100,000 that's stimulating lots of money raising ideas!

4 for 1 offer

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Christmas Services

Sunday 21 st	10.30	Family Service
	4.00	Carol Service <i>followed by tea</i>
Christmas Eve	4.00	Crib Service <i>children dress up</i>
	7.00	Candle-lit Carols
Christmas Day	10.00	Family Service <i>The Methodists join us</i>

**Roger Whitehead, minister of the church,
shares his thoughts**



I love Christmas time—the cards, presents, children’s nativity plays and visitors. The story never gets stale and the carols seem as fresh as ever.

But, if I am honest, we sometimes cut the story short, forgetting that Jesus and his family escaped as refugees to Egypt before Herod massacred many young boys. There is joy at the safe arrival of a baby and wonder at the way shepherds and wise men came to see the baby. But that cannot hide the

dark side of the tale.

I said this recently to a colleague who seemed a little shocked. But I had been watching a programme about child soldiers and prostitutes in the Rwanda-Congo war and about amputations carried out by rebel soldiers seeking to terrorize civilians. It seemed not unlike the world Jesus was born into.

It seems to me the Christmas story tells us that God is willing to get involved in the worst aspects of human behaviour, and the answer is not more violence but peace, sharing, self-denial and love all the year round.

MESSY CHURCH CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS

42 children enjoyed craft, songs and a meal with a number of parents joining in too. One of the newest activities we’ve added is a prayer corner with a chance for the children to light a candle and say or write a prayer or even draw a prayer picture. The prayers last time included:

Dear God thank you for our food.

Dear Lord, please look after my Great-Grandma in Heaven. Amen.

Dear God, please help all the people who have illnesses, like people with asthma or cancer, things like that. Amen

Any families who would like to join come to the Methodist Church Hall on the 12 Dec or 16 Jan - 3.45 to 6.0. Details from Marie Whitehead 889 098.



at work on a space collage

PLANS TO MAKE CHURCH A COMMUNITY CENTRE

In the past year Dawlish URC has spent a lot of time thinking about what its role should be in the future. Everyone agrees that it is a privilege to be the only church in the centre of our town. There is a growing sense that God has a purpose in this, which is that we should not be planning a refurbished building for ourselves—we should be offering our building as a resource for the community.

So during the autumn a small group has been meeting groups in the community to talk about how our building

might be useful to them and the town. It has now been decided to go one step further and lease the church building to a community trust to be used by the people of Dawlish, with the church as one of the groups.

Among other things we plan a suite of computers, a wet weather programme for holiday makers in the summer, and encouraging more fairs and exhibitions. Phone 88 90 98 for a leaflet about our proposals or visit our web site (www.DawlishURC.org.uk). We really want to hear your views.

Regular events

Sundays

10.30 **Service & Junior Church**
Communion 1st Sun
Healing Service 3rd Sun
(alternate months)
Afterwards fair trade tea & coffee

Tuesdays (alternate weeks)

2.00 **Knit & Chat**
knitting for an orphanage in Malawi

Wednesdays

10.00 **Coffee Morning**
10.00 **Parents & Toddlers**
children from 0 - 3 and their parents
2.30 **Friendship Hour**
Talks, videos & members’ contributions

Thursdays

2.30 **Keep Fit**
exercises to enjoy for keeping the body and mind alert

Saturdays

10.00 **Choir practice**
The choir leads the singing at each Sunday service

Baptisms, Weddings & Funerals
by arrangement with the Minister

Minister

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Visit our website:

www.DawlishURC.org.uk