

# ***In touch***



## ***information from Dawlish URC***

*the church with the spire*

***August 2012***

### **FROM THE MINISTER**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> July the most senior officers of our Synod lunched at the Lunch Club and then spent four hours with the elders and the Strand Centre trustees. They came to discuss the finances of our church and to see how they could help us to meet the deficit which we face this year. They also wanted to know something of the health of the church and its long term plans. When they met the Strand trustees they explained the complexities of getting planning permission and wanted to know how the trustees saw the Centre developing.

I thought both were good meetings. The Synod Officers showed good will and a willingness to listen; they recognised that we are a small and elderly congregation, but they were clearly impressed by the church's vision for its future. In the context of our deficit they said our giving was better than many churches. They suggested grants we might apply for and promised to seek ways of lowering our M&M target.

They were similarly impressed by what the Strand Centre has achieved in fifteen months and its Development Plan, as well as by the quality of trustees which the Strand Trust has. They indicated that they would do what they could to speed up the process of getting planning permission for the so-called temporary work

I came away heartened not because of the help they offered (which was encouraging), but because it seemed to me the way Christians ought to deal with one another. There was an affirmation of support for church and centre; points were put, sometimes strongly, but always out of passion and never out of malice or complaint; there was mutual understanding—ours of the restrictions under which they work, and theirs of our passion for a building to serve church and community. It was a lovely example of how the church ought to work. Thanks be to God for it.



ROGER WHITEHEAD



## **SYNOD OFFICERS MEET THE STRAND CENTRE TRUSTEES**

A very useful meeting was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> July with the key Synod officers to deal with the health of the congregation and its financial situation.

### **Doing the ‘temporary work’**

The Synod officers clarified the responsibilities of the Strand Church and the centre in progressing the toilets, kitchenette and ramp, and it seems likely that, if the LBAC supported the plans, the Synod Property Committee will give the go-ahead when the required minimum of £44,000 had been raised.

It was pointed out for the first time that ‘temporary’ means time-limited as well as reversible. The Synod Property will put a time limit on any planning permission for temporary work (probably five years) with the possibility of one extension if necessary. The Synod officers said that if the major scheme did not go ahead, a fresh application to make it permanent would be necessary.

### **Phasing the main scheme**

The reasons for phasing the main scheme were accepted. The clear impression was given was that if enough money were raised to do the floor-and-gallery work, permission was likely to be given.

### **Synod financial support for the Strand Community Trust**

The Synod’s legal advice is that because of the Landlord-Tenant relationship the Synod Trust is not be able to give capital towards the cost of any structural work in the building undertaken by the Strand Community Trust. However, it might be possible to get a grant towards revenue expenditure (eg to pay a Development Worker) depending on what percentage of his/her time was given “to support the activities and charitable purposes of the United Reformed Church in Dawlish” (Strand Community Trust’s third object).

### **Copyright**

The trustees suggested that other churches in the future who might want to use the legal work done in relation to the Strand Church/the Strand Community Trust lease should be asked to contribute to the initial cost. The idea was noted.

### **General impression**

It seemed to several trustees that some of the Synod Officers did not understand the niceties of the relationship between the Strand Church and the Strand Community Trust in terms of VAT and the theological approach of the Strand Church which is seeking to model a relationship of servanthood.

## SYNOD OFFICERS MEET WITH ELDERS



### Finance

At their meeting with the elders, the Synod officers recognised that the Strand Church had spent its resources on securing planning permission to remove the pews and in legal fees to set up the lease of the premises to the Strand Community Trust. They suggested therefore that they would give sympathetic consideration to

an application for a 50% grant towards the cost of the fees (in total about £17,500) and for a 'Face Lift' grant for half the cost of the dry rot work and the finial on the Strand hall roof. The total of these two is about £3,400.

looking again at the church's target for the Mission & Ministry Fund, recognising that help may be needed in the next few years because the target is always set on figures two years out of date.

The Synod officers also suggested the church sought a reduction on the rent paid to the Strand Centre. It was pointed out that the agreement between the two bodies made clear that the Strand Church would pay users' rates; failure to do this would imperil the Centre's ability to recover VAT on new building work (worth around £12,000 on the toilets and kitchenette scheme); and the church is saving over £1,500 pa when the money saved by not paying the running costs of the building are put against no longer receiving any income from lettings.

### Future of the Strand Hall

The Synod officers explained that the promise that the Strand Church could retain the hall "until the work in the main church has been done" remains, but that the Synod would put a time limit on this, which will probably be five years.

### Street Chapel

It was recognised that the Street Chapel is a key element in the development of the Strand Church's mission strategy, and there was general encouragement to get on with the work, and to ask for this to be included in the 'Face Lift' grant.

### Future of Ministry

The Synod officers asked how much the development of the congregation and centre depends on Roger Whitehead. The elders explained the elders' own work for the centre and how many URC folk are volunteers in centre activities. This is alongside the growing support of non-URC people in the centre.

The elders reported that they have thought about future ministry, but not reached any conclusions.



## STRAND CHURCH NOTICE BOARD

**Save your Fair Trade logos.** Dawlish Fair Trade group is taking part in the Carnival procession wearing clothes covered with Fair Trade labels. Please save any you have for Jean Potter. Come and watch the sight!

On 5<sup>th</sup> August at 6.30 in the Methodist Church, **Alethe Virgin** (Chair of the Strand Centre) will be licensed as a local preacher. All are invited.

**Carnival Praise and Family Fun Day on The Lawn on 5th August** arranged by Dawlish Christian Fellowship from 12.00 promises bouncy castle, children's and adult activities, a magic show and Songs of Praise from 3.00—4.00.

**Dawlish Home Aid's** charity on 7<sup>th</sup> August is myasthenia gravis. It causes the muscles to weaken. Facial expressions, chewing, talking, and swallowing are especially susceptible. In bad cases it can affect breathing and lead to death.

**The Carnival Service** on 12<sup>th</sup> at 6.45 follows tradition when the speaker, Revd Vincent Canning (a retired Methodist minister living in Dawlish), brings Gladly Bear with him to amuse and challenge those gathering in the marquee.

**The Great Ejection on St Bartholomew's Day** in 1662 (23<sup>rd</sup> August) was when 2,000 ministers of the Reformed tradition (Congregational and Presbyterian) were expelled from their livings and their homes because they would not agree with the re-introduction of Anglican restrictions on worship. Events to mark this are taking place in the Puritans Pit, Bradley Wood, Newton Abbot. Our service on 23<sup>rd</sup> September will focus on this sad historic event.

**Advanced Notice - Queen of Smoke on 8<sup>th</sup> September** Rebecca Ramsden is arranging a concert of modern Christian music and some Christian rock music in aid of the church funds. During this she will give her testimony about how Jesus has changed her life. We hope many members of the congregation will give this their full support and bring their friends.

### Visit the Holy Land

Paul Snell is leading a pilgrimage to Israel/Palestine from 15<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> April 2013. Starting in Jerusalem the tour will visit all the major sites in Jerusalem and Bethlehem as well as the Dead Sea and Masada. The second half of the tour is based beside the Sea of Galilee and includes many Northern Israel sites. There is an option to extend the trip with 2 days extra relaxation in Galilee. The tour is managed by Maranatha Tours (Euro) and includes flights with BA. Full details are at Paul's website [www.thesnells.org.uk](http://www.thesnells.org.uk).

## NEWS FROM THE STRAND TRUSTEES

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After the positive meeting with the Synod officers, the Strand trustees have been considering how to implement the Business Development Plan which was key to their discussion with the Synod officers. This includes:

### **Appointment of a Catering Officer**

It was agreed to develop the present catering arrangements into a whole day drop-in centre by franchising the parts of each day in which no organisation is providing catering. The franchise will set out a basic menu to be provided for each session at the same price every day and to develop a 'brand' which means that customers know what they are getting each day (perhaps with some specials). The Centre is looking for a suitable person who is entrepreneurial and who will work under the Centre's brand and ethos.

### **A catering overseer**

Consideration is being given to appointing a volunteer to be responsible for ensuring that all the catering reaches the required health and safety standard including the kitchens, and to work with the providers to train volunteers and to develop the 'brand'.

### **Marketing**

A Town Manager for Dawlish is to be appointed in Dawlish with a job description including marketing the town. S/he will be an essential part of the marketing strategy of the Centre. We also hope get an article in *the Dawlish Gazette* about the Centre, and possibly a weekly column.

### **Building work**

**Dry rot** has returned around the external west door of the Strand Hall, due to water pouring down the wall. A builder has been asked **to re-roof this area** by the end of the month. A new **external notice board** was agreed showing details of both the Centre and the Church. A number of electrical works have been approved to meet the **Insurance Assessor's requirements**; and the **Fire Officer's Report** will lead to more heat alarms and better emergency lighting, and emergency exit signs. The mortice lock in the upper hall door will be replaced by a yale lock. Those with a mortice lock key should exchange them for a yale key. Regular **maintenance checks** on equipment have been introduced.

**The Accident/First Aid book** in each building must be completed in the event of *any* accident.

**Grants** are being applied for to complete the toilet and kitchenette works and to pay for a development worker.



## ELDERS MEETING REPORT

### Reflections on the Meeting with the Synod Officers

It was agreed that the meeting had gone well. There had seemed to be a sympathetic hearing and hints of support. The elders discussed how to take forward the outcomes of the meeting.

**Finance** There was satisfaction at the promise to look again at our M&M target. It was agreed not to have a major effort to **raise giving** but to hold an informal meeting to discuss it. There will be talks with the Strand trustees about co-coordinating plans for **fund raising activities**.

**The Street Chapel** was clearly seen as important for our mission by the Synod Officers and plans will be taken forward in step with the work planned by the Centre. Grant applications will be made to the Synod and others towards the cost of this.

### Past and future

Even with Andy Murray in the **Wimbledon final**, there was not a great demand to see it screened in the auditorium. It was not well advertised; next year we will advertise in advance that there will be a screening if he is in the final. It was decided not to screen the Olympics unless there is real public interest in a Briton in a particular event.

Preparations are in hand for the **Banner Exhibition** during Carnival Week. Help is needed each day to provide refreshments and keep an eye on the banners.

### Plaques

The plaques will shortly be fixed to the chairs. It was noted that two people who had purchased a plaque had been deeply moved to see it. Pat Willis was thanked for her work on this.

### General Assembly

Jean Potter shared news about the General Assembly she had been at. She will report highlights as part of a future service. Fuller information next month.

### OFFERINGS AND OTHER SPECIAL INCOME

#### Sunday Offerings\*    Special Collections and Events

**2012    2011**

June	£2,035	£1,228	<b>Coffee Mornings</b> in June (2011 = £63)	£296
Total to date	£8,878	£8,551	<b>Fund raising</b>	£0

*\* includes standing orders etc but not Gift Aid rebates*



## FOR YOUR PRAYERS

### Pray unceasingly

It would be good if everyone of us prayed daily **for Helen and for Ray**, as Helen's physical situation gets no better.



**Peter Strick**, who died on 5<sup>th</sup> July and who was a committed member of the church, wrote this prayer to be used at his funeral.

I thank you, Lord, for my good life on Earth  
and for the appreciation of Nature and Music,  
which has given so much pleasure throughout the years.

I thank you for the precious blessing of my lovely devoted Eve,  
whose goodness and intelligence gave me guidance so many times.  
I give thanks, too for our wonderful children and grandchildren.  
I am so proud of them all, and I love them all.

Thank you also for the kindness of family and good friends  
for which I have been truly grateful.

Above all, I thank you for the day you revealed yourself to me  
and confirmed the Faith and Light  
which has overcome every darker episode along the way.

May everyone here receive the blessing of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

### For those on holiday

Creator God  
who rested on the seventh day  
and who has commanded us to rest;  
we pray for those on holiday:  
that their bodies may be replenished  
their minds may be renewed  
and their souls may be refreshed.  
Give them joy in their companions;  
deepen the relationships they have  
with one another and with you.

### For those who face crucial decisions

Accompanying God,  
we pray for all who face crucial decisions:  
for young people awaiting exam results,  
for the unemployed seeking work,  
for those who are moving home,  
and for those who find themselves alone.  
We also pray for those who support them,  
who share their anxieties  
and rejoice in their successes;  
walk beside them at this time, we pray.

for information on Jesus visit: [www.rejesus.co.uk](http://www.rejesus.co.uk)  
for information about Christianity visit: [www.christianity.org.uk](http://www.christianity.org.uk)

## SERVICES IN AUGUST



5	10.30	<b>Holy Communion</b>	Revd Roger Whitehead
12	10.30	Celebrating Carnival	Revd Roger Whitehead
19	10.30	Family Service	Revd Tim Woods
26	10.30	Commitment for Life	Mrs Barbara Madge

### Other Services

5	12.00	<b>Service &amp; Family Fun Day</b> led by Dawlish Christian Fellowship on Lawn
12	6.45	<b>Carnival Songs of Praise</b> on the Lawn led by Churches Together
26	6.30	<b>Iona Service</b> in the Methodist Church

## CHURCH EVENTS IN AUGUST

**Thursdays** 10.00 - 12.00 **Coffee Morning**

**Fridays** 5.45 - 6.45 **Choir Practice #**

## CHURCH EVENTS RESUMING IN SEPTEMBER

**Tuesdays** 2.00 - 4.00 **Knit & Chat** (resumes 11<sup>th</sup> Sept) #

**Thursdays** 10.00 - 12.00 **Coffee Morning** (Kids & Coffee resumes 6<sup>th</sup> Sept) §  
2.30 - 3.30 **Friendship Hour #** (resumes 12<sup>th</sup> Sept)

**Fridays** 12.30 - 2.00 **Bible Study Group** (resumes 14<sup>th</sup>) #  
3.45 - 6.00 **Messy Church** (in the Methodist Hall—21<sup>st</sup> Sept)

## ADDITIONAL MEETINGS IN AUGUST

(on our premises unless otherwise indicated)

**Sat 4** 10.00 **Table Top Sale §**

**Tues 7** 10.00 **Home Aid Coffee Morning** for Myasthenia Gravis § (see p. 6)

**Mon 13<sup>th</sup> - Fri 17<sup>th</sup>** **BANNER EXHIBITION** 10.00—4.00 §

**Mon 13** 6.00 **Elders Meeting #**

auditorium § Strand Hall † lounge x in the foyer #

The Whiteheads are away from 18th August to 4th September

## THE STRAND CHURCH

<b>Minister</b>	Revd Roger Whitehead	28 High Street	889 098
<b>Acting Sec</b>	Mrs Jean Potter	1, Ivy Lane, Teignmouth	773856
<b>Treasurer</b>	Mr Rychard Winslade	3 Prospect House East Cliff Road	866 948
<b>Bookings</b>	Mrs Janet Garland	10, Luscombe Terrace	888312