



***information  
from Strand Church  
the church at the centre of town  
November 2013***

**FROM THE MINISTER**

Statistics suggest that we think that the National Health Service is not performing very well, but experience of our local hospital is very good. Personal experience does not translate into a belief that the same is true in other hospitals and the NHS as a whole. Criticism or ignorance of the NHS leaves us with a low opinion of what is beyond our experience. The same perverse attitude is true in other areas of life - the policemen we know are helpful and kind; the police as a whole are not.

The contemporary view of the church is very similar. Christians are generally thought well of by those who know them, but the institutional church is regarded as out-of-date and concerned with unimportant internal matters.

One of our difficulties is to get over to people that our good works as Christians arise from and are sustained by the fellowship of the church. It is not that we are naturally good people - what we are and what we do is motivated by our following Jesus Christ, who preached and modelled a life of service to the poor, the outcast, the sick and the hungry. In one sense it is the church that should get whatever credit there is. Until we can get this message understood, the church will be seen as a club of like-minded people rather than as the energising force which means that Christians on average give eight times more hours to community service than the nation as a whole and Christians give far more money to causes like the alleviation of world poverty or defending the marginalised.



I don't know what we can do to explain the value of the church, apart from sharing informally with people whenever we can what the church means to us and how it helps us to be more like Jesus.

ROGER WHITEHEAD



## Snippets

## ELDERS MEETING REPORT

We are still waiting for a report on the **work needing to be done to the organ**; and arranging for the **frame for the grand piano** to be fitted. The Moderator of the URC General Assembly has agreed to visit us in September as part of our **200<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations**. One idea for an anniversary theme is *Dawlish 1814, 1941 and 2014*. Congratulations to **June Wilson** on her accreditation as a Synod lay preacher; her formal recognition will take place during the morning service on 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

The Synod Moderator and the Synod Pastoral Advisor met separately with the minister and the elders and **Roger Whitehead's ministry** will continue with a further review in 2015. The Treasurer pointed out that the **church accounts** were likely to be in deficit at the end of the year. Ideas for **paying off the debt** arising from the cost of re-roofing the church in 2008 are being considered.

A meeting of elders from our area was convened by the Synod to discuss **elders' responsibilities**. It stressed the importance of risk assessments regarding Asbestos; Electrics; and Fire Safety. As these are matters for the Strand Community Trust, it was agreed to draw its attention to them.

### Use of the Chapel

Everyone wants the Chapel in the west vestibule in use as soon as possible. There was a discussion about developing its use based even while it remains the main entrance into the building. There was general agreement to experiment with a weekly service of prayer for healing in the Chapel before building work is completed; this would have to be in the afternoon when the auditorium is not in use. This idea was preferred to increasing the number of Prayer for Healing Services at 10.30 from bimonthly to monthly.

There was a discussion on the number of prayer requests which even now are posted on the noticeboard in the chapel area, and the increasing number of prayer requests relating to immediate bereavements and commemoration of past deaths. It was suggested that in some way the Chapel might help people to remember their loved ones, particularly on special anniversaries. One idea was to explore with other churches whether there might be an additional memorial event in the future.



## Resignation of Pauline Laybourne

Pauline Laybourne has resigned as a serving elder because of the difficulties of discharging her pastoral duties. This was accepted with regret, and the meeting recorded the church's gratitude for her contribution over many years, and expressed pleasure that she would continue as a church member and would help once a week with the café. Consideration is being given to whether additional elders should be elected.

## PROPERTY MATTERS

### Leak

As reported last month, the ceiling outside the old toilet collapsed after a very significant leak in an extremely heavy downpour. South Hams Roofing, which re-roofed the building six years ago, believes the leak was caused by a wrongly positioned down pipe which caused a build up of water in the gully between the toilet roof and the hall wall, and this soaked through the porous stone wall. Under the lease with the Strand Community Trust, the responsibility for the repairs remains with the Strand Church. An assessor from the insurance company has looked at the damage. The ceiling will not be replaced until it is clear that the roofing timbers are dry and free from rot and the remedial action has solved the problem.

### Help is needed

Neither the Church nor the Centre has anyone with responsibility looking after the property. There is a great need for someone to oversee getting work done. The list at present includes finding firms to cut back the greenery on the wall behind the apse; give quotes for replacing the handbasins in the hall toilets with pedestal handbasins; chasing Roger's Cleaning to seal the floor of the auditorium; getting quotes for simplifying the meters and switches in the electrical cupboard in the hall; and replacing bulbs in the auditorium and in the outside lights in Lawn Hill. This list is now four months old! Knowledge and skills in building are not required – just someone to give some time to this.

### 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>Church Phone:</b>	01626 889038	<b>website:</b>	<a href="http://www.StrandChurch.org.uk">www.StrandChurch.org.uk</a>



### Progress on street pastors

Plans are nearly complete to start a Christian presence at weekends on the streets of Teignmouth and Dawlish. 45 people have volunteered to help, and more are always welcome. It is probable that UCADD will work with the Christian Nightlife Initiatives (CNI) network in partnership with the churches in Teignmouth. Three groups are needed – one to be on the streets; one to pray for them; and one to run a support café to which those in particular need can be brought while something is arranged for them. Training will begin before Christmas with the intention of starting in the New Year.

### Other initiatives

Research into **local food banks** continues to assess the demand and how UCADD might relate to at least three local groups who help the hungry. UCADD does not want to set up another network, but to provide what Dawlish needs. The idea of supporting a local branch of **Christians Against Poverty** is not being followed up until it is clear how the other proposed UCADD initiatives will develop, but there is a strong desire to associate with CAP which has an outstanding track record of supporting those who have unmanageable debts.

### Locally rooted

UCADD is the expression of the community work of the churches in Dawlish, and so it is important that the churches are involved in the planning which UCADD does. This is done partly by visiting churches – we appreciated the visit of Kay Partridge to speak about her involvement in schools work – and partly by convening meetings of the leaders of the churches. A meeting for representative elders is being held on 5<sup>th</sup> December at Dawlish Christian Fellowship. UCADD can be supported by becoming a friend and perhaps making a monthly or quarterly contribution to its work.

### OFFERINGS AND OTHER SPECIAL INCOME IN SEPTEMBER

	Sunday Offerings*		Special Collections and Events	
	2013	2012		
September	1,653	£1,763	<b>Coffee Mornings</b> (Sept 2012 = £200)	£80
Year so far	£11,802	£13,852	<b>Gifts/fund raising</b> (Sept 2012 = £0)	£0

\* includes standing orders etc but not Gift Aid rebates

## THE STRAND CENTRE



### Lunch Clubs

One of the first things we did when the hall kitchen was upgraded was to start two Luncheon Clubs. They are clubs because they not only provide good food, but they give an opportunity for people to make new friends. The Tuesday one is run by Oakwood Court College and provides young adults with learning (and sometimes physical) difficulties to interact with the community. Both Clubs have vacancies. Church members may feel that supporting these is part of our Christian service to those less fortunate than ourselves. Like the café these are run by volunteers.

### Bookings

Now that the bookings have been put on line, we are looking for a Bookings Secretary. Access to the internet is all that is needed. We are very fortunate to have Anne Pemberton on a temporary basis as our Centre Administrator but she is overloaded. We also need someone to take over issuing invoices for bookings. Please let Roger Whitehead know if you can think of anyone who would be interested. We also need a Treasurer.

### Cleaner

Because of a change in booking arrangements, Hilary Barlow has resigned as hall cleaner, and the work is now being undertaken by Adejake Sasi. We are glad to have her on the team.

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## WHAT MAKES A PERSON HAPPY

The Office for National Statistics has found that being married is 20 times more important to a person's well-being than their earnings, and 13 times more important than owning a home. The figures also indicate that having children has almost no impact on a person's day-to-day happiness, although it does make them feel life is more "worthwhile".

For the first time, the ONS has been able to use the data to rank the factors which contribute to happiness and well-being. Health and employment are the two most important factors, with marriage or civil partnerships coming third.

The researchers said they made some unexpected findings. They found that people with degrees were significantly more anxious than those who had not been to university, while the top 10% of Britain's earners were more anxious than those who earned less.

## NOTICEBOARD

### Prayer Meeting and Bible Study return to Fridays

The experiment of moving these meetings to a Monday did not work, and they have returned to Fridays until a more suitable time can be found – see diary.

### Charity Christmas Card Sale – Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 10.00 – 12.00

Come and buy your cards and support local charities.

### Torbay URC Churches Quiz – Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November at Central URC

Help make up a winning team. Lifts available.

### Future events

The annual **Remembering Service** for those recently bereaved or wishing to remember a loved one will be held this year in St Gregory's Church on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December at 7.00 pm.

There will be a **Synod training session** on *Bringing death to Life* on 22<sup>nd</sup> February in Southernhay Church for those interested in developing work among the bereaved

### For worship leaders: Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November 10.00 - 4.00 Taunton URC -

#### New ideas for introducing biblical parables In worship

The Synod is holding a workshop on the use of puppets, storytelling, music, drama, poetry and art to enhance the worship experience and to offer new perspectives on familiar parables from the Bible.

### AN APPEAL FOR CHILDREN'S COATS

I find it a very sad that I have to make an Appeal for warm winter coats for local children in Teignbridge between 0 - 11. All coats will be distributed by HITS (Homeless In Teignbridge Support). Save the Children Fund says that 1 in 7 children this winter will be without a warm coat. If anyone can donate - mothers, grandmothers, fathers and all family members - please let me know and I will see they are taken to either CAB or TDC offices where the staff are giving their time to support. *Rosalind Prowse 01626 866621.*

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

<b>Jesus</b>	<a href="http://www.rejesus.co.uk">www.rejesus.co.uk</a>
<b>Christianity:</b>	<a href="http://www.christianity.org.uk">www.christianity.org.uk</a>
<b>The Strand Church:</b>	<a href="http://www.strandchurch.org.uk">www.strandchurch.org.uk</a>
<b>The Strand Centre:</b>	<a href="http://www.strandcentre.org.uk">www.strandcentre.org.uk</a>

## FOR YOUR PRAYERS



This month includes Remembrance Sunday when we remember those who died in their service to their country. War can easily lead to hatred and the desire for retribution - or forgiveness.



### Minister prays for those who killed his family

A Church of Scotland minister whose mother, nephew, niece, and two uncles were killed in a suicide bombing at a church in Pakistan has spoken of his efforts to forgive those responsible.

The Reverend Aftab Gohar (*pictured*), of Abbotsgrange parish in Grangemouth, said he would pray for the people behind the attack.

"From my childhood, I have learned this is the message of Jesus Christ - on the cross he said Father forgive them because they don't know what they are doing, and this is what I can say. Forgive them Father because they don't know what they are doing," he said.

The bombing of All Saints' Church in Peshawar on 22 September claimed 122 lives. About 168 people were injured in the bombing, including Revd Gohar's niece Farah, 23, who is paralysed from the waist down.



### Editorial comment

The Rev Gohar is a man of mercy. "Forgive them Father," he says of the killers, "because they don't know what they are doing."

One need not believe in Him to wonder at the humanity.

*From the i newspaper 21/10/13*

### A prayer on which to meditate

*Take each section and picture yourself doing what is being prayed for*

We commit ourselves to work in penitence and faith for reconciliation between the nations, that all people may, together, live in freedom, justice and peace.

We pray for all who in bereavement, disability and pain continue to suffer the consequences of fighting and terror.

We remember with thanksgiving and sorrow those whose lives, in world wars and conflicts past and present, have been given and taken away.

### A Meditation: Poppies

"In Flanders fields the poppies blow,  
between the crosses, row on row."

Blood red poppies,  
symbols of lives lost in bloody battle,  
of bodies disfigured, of families shattered,  
but a sign too of new life in war-ravaged soil.

The red dissolves to white as the blood drains.

White poppies rise, symbols of lives lost  
as a consequence of war,  
of bodies maimed, of families broken,  
... but a sign too of peace, of hope,  
of working together across the barriers  
for justice, forgiveness and reconciliation.

## SERVICES IN NOVEMBER



### Sunday Morning Services at 10.30 unless otherwise stated

3	Holy Communion	Revd Roger Whitehead § *
10	Remembrance Service	Mrs Jean Potter §
17	Prayers for Healing	Revd Roger Whitehead §
24	Family Service	Mrs Helen Potter §

\* During this service June Wilson will be commissioned as a lay preacher

### Other services

10	3.00	<b>Act of Remembrance and Service</b>	St Gregory's
17	4.00	<b>Prospect Service</b> ,	Dawlish Christian Fellowship
24	6.30	<b>Iona Service</b>	United with Methodist Church (in our church)

## CHURCH EVENTS IN NOVEMBER

<b>Tuesdays</b>	2.00 - 4.00	<b>Knit &amp; Chat</b> (5 <sup>th</sup> & 19 <sup>th</sup> ) §
<b>Thursdays</b>	10.00 - 12.00	<b>Coffee &amp; Kids</b> (Toddlers Group run by the Church) §
<b>Fridays</b>	11.30 - 12.15	<b>Prayer Meeting #</b>
	1.00 - 2.00	<b>Bible Study Group #</b>
	5.45 - 6.45	Choir Practice resumes in the spring

## ADDITIONAL MEETINGS IN NOVEMBER

(on our premises unless otherwise indicated)

<b>Mon</b>	1	5.00	<b>Elders Meeting</b> ✕
<b>Sat</b>	2	10.00	<b>Charity Christmas Card Sale</b> §
<b>Wed</b>	6	7.00	<b>Torbay URC Quiz Night</b> , Central Church, Torquay
<b>Tues</b>	12	10.30	<b>Methodist-URC Liaison Committee</b> ✕
		12.30	<b>Churches Together Forum</b> ✕
<b>Fri</b>	15	3.45	<b>Messy Church</b> (in the Methodist Hall)
<b>Sat</b>	16	8.30	<b>Men's Breakfast</b> , Dawlish Warren (lifts available)

§ in the auditorium † in the Strand Hall ✕ Strand Hall lounge # in Carey Room

## CHANGE OF DAY OF BIBLE STUDY TO MONDAYS

From the beginning of this month the Prayer Meeting will be return to being held on Fridays at 11.30 and the Bible Study at 1.00 in the Carey Room.