

In touch



information from Strand Church

the church at the centre of town

July 2014

FROM THE MINISTER

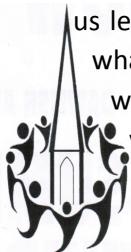
At their recent Quiet Day the elders looked at the congregation's strengths and weaknesses. Our main weakness is that we are an old congregation, and we struggle to take advantage of the opportunities which we have as the town centre church. This puts pressure on the most active members who are asked to sustain our work. It is not good or godly to feel that going to worship is a duty or burden rather than an engagement with God.

If there were easy solutions, we (and other churches in a similar position) would have found them.

The best I can do is to take seriously what Paul says in II Corinthians 12. Paul, who has healing gifts, has prayed faithfully three times for God to remove his physical ailment and Paul was not healed. Then he came to understand that what God was saying was, "My grace is all you need, for my power is strongest when you are weak."

It does not seem to me that Paul is saying, "When I am weak I give up and let God do it all". I think Paul is saying that when he accepts his weakness and its consequences, God can and will start acting to achieve what God wants. In other words, in our weakness, how do we let the strength of God take over?

I think there are two things to do if we are serious. One is to pray seriously. Our prayer meeting is small; sometimes we do not pray very effectively. Let us learn prayer and practice it. The second thing is to make sure that what we want to achieve is what God wants to achieve through our weakness. In our church this would seem to be looking afresh at our vision and what it entails, and asking God whether we have got it right. God's strength is to achieve what God wants, not what we think God wants.



ROGER WHITEHEAD

ELDERS MEETING REPORT



Snippets

For the second successive time, a Strand Church elder will be representing the South Western Synod at **General Assembly**. Rychard Winslade is one of the lay representatives (see also page 7). £100 was donated to the church when the Café was opened for “Let’s All Go Down The Strand”. Thanks were expressed to those who had been involved. The **review of the way in which our Synod works** is coming to an end. Our elders held a Quiet Day looking in part at how the Synod might better support the mission of the local church and shared their thinking with our Synod Pastoral Advisor at a meeting following the AGM. The Elders were pleased to hear that plans were going ahead for **Teignbridge Churches’ support for Churches Against Poverty**. The elders reaffirmed their earlier promise of £25 per month for a year. It was noted that the **annual subscription for Churches Together** in Dawlish and District had been increased from £25 for smaller churches to £50 and for larger churches to £100. It was agreed to pay the new subscription.

Property Matters

Although the Strand Centre is responsible for most of the maintenance and development of the buildings, the Strand Church has certain residual responsibilities. It continues to try to get listed building consent for the **ramp and chapel** which is all that holds up this work. Discussions have begun with a bespoke carpenter about proposed **new Communion furniture** beginning with a light-weight and foldable Communion Table. It is hoped to place a contract this month. Work to repair the west wall of the **organ chamber** has been commissioned and it is hoped that the **organ repairs** will start this month. It is also hoped to improve the **storage of the banners** and **repair the floor of the reprographic room** (formerly the vestry toilet).

Assembly Moderator’s visit

It was agreed to host a Devonshire Cream Tea for the neighbouring URC churches on Saturday 13th September, and to explore the idea of a lunch for the local clergy and ministers with the Moderator on Sunday 14th. The theme of the Moderator’s visit might be the Micah Challenge which had been adopted by the Assembly, and in which the Moderator had a particular interest.

Ecumenical Reports

The Elders Meeting always has reports from ecumenical bodies including UCADD and Churches Together, details of which appear elsewhere. Some time was spent on the **Methodist-URC Liaison Group** which members said had been unimaginative. It is hoped that the arrival of the Methodist probationer minister in September might lead to more imaginative discussion about the way in which the two churches could cooperate.

THE MICAH CHALLENGE

The Micah Challenge is a global movement of Christian agencies, churches, groups and individuals which aims to deepen people's engagement with the poor and to help reduce poverty as an integral part of our Christian faith. It takes its name from the prophet Micah, who wrote:

“What does the Lord require of you but to do justice,
to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8).

It has two main purposes:

Inward Change: prayerfully to encourage Christians to walk humbly with God and become lifelong advocates for the poor. It aims to deepen the commitment of Christians to proclaim and demonstrate the love of Jesus to a world in need. This means Christians from all backgrounds showing God's kindness and justice and Christians making a lifelong commitment to speaking out against the injustice of poverty.

Outward Action: to inspire and equip Christians to do justice and love kindness by being prophetic voices to the government and community and to defend the rights of the poor and oppressed (Ps 82). Micah Challenge urges decision makers to fulfil their promise to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

OFFERINGS AND OTHER SPECIAL INCOME

Sunday Offerings*

Special Collections and Events

2014 2013

May	£1,738	£720	Sunday coffee money now goes to the Centre which provides the coffee
Year (so far)	£7,964	£3,582	

* includes standing orders etc but not Gift Aid rebates

UNITED CHRISTIAN ACTION IN DAWLISH & DISTRICT

Inspire Community Café

The Joint Management Committee of the Inspire Café is beginning to function well, though as yet there are no representatives from the other churches. Adam Gidney had been appointed chef and manager using some of the £7,000 gift given to the café to secure his pay for the first six months. He was a chef in Australia; he lives in Teignmouth where he is father to three month old twins. Ultimately he hopes to become an Anglican priest. Meanwhile he works part-time with Pizza Express and three days a week for the Inspire Café. It is hoped that he will generate sufficient income to work full time.



Adam believes in locally-sourced home-cooked food. This has raised the standard of lunches which are now building up a regular clientele. Takings are up by 50% to 80% since he started. He also caters for the Jeffersonian Dinners which has relieved volunteers of producing them.

[Jeffersonian dinners originated with USA President Jefferson who invited informed guests to a meal in order to talk though the business of the day. The main features are that there is a Chair who has an agenda, and that all conversation is 'to the chair'; small talk in groups is not permitted.]

Nightshift

The first volunteers completed their Nightshift training at the end of May and were commissioned at a special service in Teignmouth Baptist Church on 1st June which was well attended by church members from both towns, as well as Parish and District Council representatives and the local police. Nightshift is affiliated to the Christian Nightlife Initiative, and its leader came from Halifax to share in the service. Unfortunately an article in *The Gazette* suggested that Dawlish Town Council did not think that Nightshift was delivering the service for which it gave a £2,000 grant. It is not clear where this misinformation came from, and at the Town Council meeting three days later, the Mayor (Cllr John Petherick) disowned the comments and expressed his and the Council's appreciation of Nightshift.



Initially Nightshift will alternate between Dawlish and Teignmouth on Friday nights. More volunteers will be trained in the autumn, and it is hoped to be in both towns two nights a week and on other occasions like Air Show night

STRAND CENTRE MATTERS



Security

Bolts are to be placed on the inner side of the door opposite the old toilet and the inner side of the door between the east vestibule and the foyer so that when there is anything of value temporarily in the auditorium it is impossible to get unauthorised access to the 1871 building from the hall, whilst the emergency exit from the hall to The Strand via the staircase to the gallery remains open. Please do not bolt or unbolt these doors without permission.

Bookings and finances

The Centre was in credit at the end of 2013 and the accounts will soon be available. There has been a significant increase in both regular and occasional bookings, which more than make up for the two groups which were no longer using the Centre. A new Dance Group is meeting three times a week and a Taichi Group will meet on Mondays in the auditorium from September. The Foot Clinic (at the same time as Cancer Research Table Top sales now meets on Tuesdays as well as Wednesdays and several occasional bookings have been made. The Centre is now being recognised as a significant part of Dawlish life.

Building work

It is hoped that during this month the ceiling outside the vestry/office will be repaired; the curtains will be hung in the auditorium, the gutterings will be cleared and other outstanding works will have been done. It is also intended to sign a contract for a new boiler. In addition the damp wall in the organ chamber will be dealt with allowing the work on cleaning and repairing the organ to take place. If Church Meeting agrees, when the ramp is put in place, the wall between the vestibule and the foyer will be replaced by a large window or an additional glass door to give more light into what will be the main entrance.

The Inspire Community Café

Under Adam Gidney's leadership (see page 4), the café is now open 9.30 – 1.30 (Monday 10.00 - 12.00) and we would like to be open for longer, but there are not enough volunteers to do this and some people are doing more hours that they want to keep the work going. Efforts are being made to recruit more volunteers from other churches; Adam Gidney had spoken at St Gregory's and was likely to be invited to speak at Dawlish Christian Fellowship.

NOTICEBOARD

Overnight emergency accommodation

Information about emergency overnight accommodation is available and is on the noticeboard in the office, should anyone be approached by someone in need.

Gerald's Charity

Geralds has two convenience stores in Dawlish and one in Dawlish Warren, and it has made The Strand Centre its charity of the year. Boxes are on display - ideal for your small change after a purchase!

COMMEMORATING WORLD WAR 1



A number of events are being planned in Dawlish overseen by a committee set up by the Town Council. The churches are playing a part in the plans in two ways.

Marking the Declaration of War

War was declared at 11 pm on 4th August 1914. To mark this the Shaftsbury Theatre is having its first night of *Oh What A Lovely War* and to be followed by a Vigil at the bandstand on The Lawn. This will seek to reflect the mood of the country, unaware of the horrors which lay ahead. In many places war was welcomed amidst an outburst of national confidence and pride. It will end at 11 pm with the extinguishing of the light on the bandstand, resonating with Earl Grey's view, "The lights are going out all over Europe."

Marking the death of Dawlish people

The History Society and the Museum have done an enormous job in researching information about Dawlish people who were killed on active service. (Dawlish is defined as associated with the town and not necessarily living in Dawlish in 1914 or having been born in the town.) Over 400 people have been identified, and their dates of death and their personal circumstances have been recorded. On the 100th anniversary of the day of death of each person there will be a special Act of Commemoration, probably held at noon. There will be the same liturgy and personal information about the person. Where ever possible an invitation will be sent to known relatives. It will last about 15/20 minutes and not all be held in the same building each time. The first will be William Criddle who was killed when his Royal Navy ship was torpedoed on 6th August 1914; his family is supplying considerable information about him.

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

The URC General Assembly meets 3rd - 6th July 2014, at St David's Hall, Cardiff, and we are invited to pray for it.



The Assembly hymn

We are people on a journey,
cloud and fire mark the way,
bread from heaven, rock-sprung water,
freedom-bound for God's new day.

Songs and stories, prayers and poems,
words that leap right off the page,
calling forth a new creation
come alive in every age.

Word made flesh, our brother Jesus,
passion's preacher, finest friend,
life laid down to open heaven,
walks beside us 'til time's end.

Holy Spirit, wild and restless,
breath of life, angelic dove,
seeding justice, kindling kindness,
summoning the Way of Love.

All our needs have been provided:
water, wine, wheat, wind and word.
drinking deeply from God's goodness,
Hope and confidence are stirred.

Living Water, you reclaim us,
Broken Bread, you make us whole,
Winsome Wind, you lead us onward,
God, our Source and Guide and Goal.

Prayer requests

for the Moderators

Mr John Ellis
(Moderator 2013-16) *and*

Revd David Grosch-Miller
(Moderator 2014-16)

for the new General Secretary

Revd Dr John Proctor



A prayer for the Assembly

*Holy Spirit,
shower the Assembly with your gifts;
and show it how to be fruitful.*

*May it be open, generous and creative
with minds and hearts receiving your
light and your truth.*

*Show it your vision for our church and
our nation
and the place of our church in it.*

*Unite its members in difficult times
that through one another
they may hear you.*

*Share with them the oneness you have
with the Father and the Son,
and hold them together in perfect unity.*

Don't forget the prayer board in the Chapel. Prayer requests left there by Saturday morning will be printed in the weekly notices sheet.

SERVICES IN JULY

Sunday Morning Services at 10.30 unless otherwise stated

- 6** Holy Communion Revd Roger Whitehead §
13 Commitment for Life Guest: Catherine Harris (Kingsteignton) §
20 Family Service Mrs Rosemary Quin §
27 Family Service Mr Peter Sweeting §

Other services

- 20** 2.00 **Dawlish Christian Fellowship Service** on The Lawn
27 6.30 **Iona Service** United with the Methodists in our Church §

REGULAR CHURCH EVENTS

- Tuesdays** 2.00 - 4.00 **Knit & Chat** (1st and 15th) §
Thursdays 10.00 - 12.00 **Coffee & Kids** (not 24th or 31st) §
 2.30 - 3.30 **Keep Fit** §
Fridays 11.30 - 12.15 **Prayer Meeting** Carey Room †
 5.30 - 6.30 **Choir practice** §

§ in the auditorium † in the Strand Hall x Strand Hall lounge # in the foyer

ADDITIONAL MEETINGS IN JULY

(in the Strand Centre unless otherwise indicated)

- Sat** **5** 10.00 **Table Top Sale** §
Fri **11** 7.30 **Filling Station**, Shaldon School (lifts available)
Wed **16** 6.45 **UCADD Jeffersonian Dinner** for church representatives §
Fri **18** 3.45 **Messy Church**, Methodist Church Hall
 7.00 **Life, Love and Praise** §

Holidays If during the holiday period you need something and cannot get a response, email: enquiries@strandchurch.org.uk

THE STRAND CHURCH

Minister	Revd Roger Whitehead	28 High Street	889 098
Acting Secretary	Mrs Jean Potter	1, Ivy Lane, Teignmouth	773856
Bookings	c/o Roger Whitehead	details above	
Church Phone:	01626 889038	website: www.StrandChurch.org.uk	