



In touch ***information*** ***from Strand Church***

the church at the centre of town

SEPTEMBER 2014

FROM THE MINISTER

Some Christian friends of mine say that Christians in our country are already suffering persecution. Although there are some who are disadvantaged and discriminated against for their faith, it seems to me that those who see persecution around them ought to reflect on the persecution of groups like the ancient Christian communities in Iraq , Egypt and Syria. Many of them have been brutally tortured and killed; and vast numbers have fled from their homes to live in extreme poverty as refugees. We honour their courage: they have not denied their faith in Christ and capitulated to evil forces.

We should be praying for our fellow believers and do what little we can to help them. We should encourage the authorities to take in traumatised and distraught widows and children and maimed fellow human beings. It is hard to imagine what it must be like - and yet we had a hint in the aftermath of the February storms when people in Dawlish had to flee from their homes leaving behind all the normal things of life which we take for granted and which enable us to live the full lives we do.

We might also wonder how we would react in such circumstances. Thank God we do not have to choose between life and martyrdom. And we might ponder whether for us the challenging cost of our faith is more subtle and so easier to ignore. Is it in sacrificial care for a member of the family; or going out of our way to befriend the lonely; or committing some of 'our own time' to help others in ways we do not necessarily find attractive.? For example, we need more volunteers and talkers in the Inspire Café - is that a cost God may be asking of you? For many of us the choice comes in the use of our money; particularly how much we give to charity. Do we count the cost in that decision; do we base it on belief that "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my life, my whole, my all?"



ROGER WHITEHEAD



ASSEMBLY MODERATOR'S VISIT POSTPONED

John Ellis was on holiday abroad when he had a freak accident which has resulted in a double fracture of his right arm that may need surgery. He will not be taking engagements for several weeks. He has agreed to postpone his visit to Dawlish until the New Year.



ELDERS MEETING REPORT

Snippets

thanks were expressed to Marie Whitehead for arranging and caring for **the hanging baskets and troughs of flowers** which adorned the outside of the building. There was no news about **retrospective listed building consent**. It was agreed to ask Rychard Winslade to **report on his experience of the General Assembly** at a church service and to recommend **Jean Potter's continuing authorisation** to preside at Communion for another year.

Registration to perform same-sex marriages

Under its consensus policy the URC General Assembly has not been able to reach agreement about whether to grant permission to local churches to hold same-sex marriages in their building. All churches had been invited to discuss the matter and report their views before the end of March 2015 so that the churches' views will inform a special meeting of the General Assembly. The next Elders Meeting will discuss how this should best be handled at a special Church Meeting.

Appointment of an administrator

UCADD asked the churches whether they would agree to the appointment of an administrator who would ultimately work across the churches and ecumenical bodies. Our response was 'yes'. UCADD needs someone to develop a list of all the churches in Teignbridge in order to form a local Teignbridge support group for Christians Against Poverty. The Strand Centre needed someone to organise the accounts following the resignation of Bob Baker. So Ceci Kokubu, the wife of Adam Gidney, has been appointed and has already submitted several grant applications on our behalf.

NIGHTSHIFT



What were you doing at 12.15 am on Saturday 16th August?

Sleeping safely in your bed, I hope, after possibly watching (or taking part in?) the Carnival procession.

I was with the Nightshift team in the Strand Hall. We had just received a phone call from the 4 members who were walking the streets, to say that a fight had broken out near the seafront; they had phoned for the police and asked us to pray for the situation. Some 20 minutes later they returned to base, reporting that the police had arrived and the young people had dispersed. Thanks be to God.

I had been in the Strand Hall a few days earlier, about the same time at night, when the team on the streets came across a “domestic incident”. Again they were the first on the scene and contacted the police, who were grateful that a female member of Nightshift was able to look after the young mother and child while officers dealt with the violent partner.

Not every night shift is as dramatic as those two! Normally the returning teams just report how many bottles they have picked up, or how many flipflops they have distributed to girls whose feet are killing them.

So how can we, the ordinary members of the Dawlish churches, support Nightshift, another initiative run by UCADD (United Christian Action in Dawlish and District)? Night owls may be challenged to join one of the teams, usually two shifts of 3 people who go out in turn for one hour between 9.30pm and about 2am.

All of us could pray for this work, as we are going to bed or perhaps by joining the teams in their base for a while, as I have been doing. The best time to drop in is probably around 10.30 or 11.30, when one team is returning and reporting and prayer is offered for those just going out. It is fascinating to listen to their stories, and a privilege to join them in prayer.

The Nightshift teams will be out in Dawlish on Saturdays 13th and 27th September. Please pray for them.

The first of monthly reports by Anne Leigh of St Gregory's provided for all the churches



PAYING OUR MINISTERS

We pay £13,000 pa (£1,100 per month) to the URC Ministry and Mission (M&M) Fund. Why? It covers the costs of work paid for centrally. This is predominantly the costs of supporting our ministers. The total expenditure budget for M&M in 2014 is £21m (a reduction of 3% compared with 2013 and 7% compared with our spending in 2012). Key expenditure is

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Stipendiary ministers | £15,000,000 |
| Initial training of ministers | £650,000 |
| Continuing training for ministers | £100,000 |
| Grants to resource centres for learning | £600,000 |
| Training for Learning and Serving (TLS) courses | £100,000 |
| Grants to lay preachers | £10,000 |

The URC has a pastoral concern and a financial obligation towards its retired ministers and contributions to their Pension Fund come out of the M&M Fund.

The URC has the privilege of being served by:

| | |
|---|-----|
| Stipendiary ministers in local churches | 491 |
| Stipendiary ministers at Church House | 7 |
| Synod Moderators | 13 |
| Self-supporting ministers | 100 |
| Church Related Community Workers | 15 |
| Training Staff in Resource Centres for Learning | 10 |
| Potential ministers /CRCWs in training | 50 |
| TLS students | 91 |
| Retired ministers | 900 |

| | Cost per Total Cost | Cost per Stipendiary Minister | Costs per URC Member |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Direct Ministry Costs | £15.2m | £33,500 | £251 |
| Ministry-related Costs | £2.5m | £5,500 | £41 |
| Other Costs | £2.7m | £6,000 | £45 |
| TOTAL | £20.4m | £45,000 | £337 |

How things have changed

When the URC was formed in 1972 there was one minister for every 138.1 members and every 1.5 churches. Today there is one minister for every 82.5

members and every 2.02 churches. Although it might not feel like it at times, we have more ministers in relation to members than at any other time (and any other denomination) – but our ministers are being spread over more and more different church bases.

BUILDINGS UPDATE – THE STRAND CENTRE’S RESPONSIBILITY

A new stopcock has finally been fitted where the old one was outside the lower door of the hall. **Ramp** progress awaits the detailed drawings from Paul Heighway. The rails for **the curtains** have been fixed but the curtain material had to be returned because it had a fault in it. Hopefully a **new boiler** will be installed in the hall kitchen not the boiler room by the end of the month.



Ceiling repair outside the old toilet has finally been done. The ceiling of the toilet area was also been loosened by the rainwater. When replacing it, the original slate water tank was found. It filled with rainwater and flushed the toilet. It rested on rotten beams and these have been replaced. Spurred on by the new ceiling in the toilet, the old external handbasin and electric water heater will be removed and new ones put within the toilet room.

BUILDINGS UPDATE – THE STRAND CHURCH’S RESPONSIBILITY

Organ repair: grant and loan applications Work on the manuals has been completed with the electrification of the action. Work on the pedals will now be done, hopefully before Christmas. The total cost is about £4,580 + VAT and the Organ Fund has received donations of £1,000 and £2,000. If the grant applications are successful the final stage will be to strip down and thoroughly restore the organ which would cost an additional £8,600 + VAT.



Floor of the reprographic room The rotten joists under the floor have all been renewed and the floor replaced with wood kindly donated by the Willises. It is hoped that there could be a general improvement in the environment of the vestry/office with a new carpet and shelves to reduce the clutter.

Will you become a UCADD supporter to help forward Christ’s ministry of caring for the poor by praying and give a small amount regularly to UCADD?
Ask for a leaflet.

NOTICEBOARD

Harvest Festival - note the change of date to 21st September

Following the success of last year's Bring and Share Harvest Lunch we will be doing the same this year. Please sign the list to indicate what you will be bringing (though you don't have to bring something in order to come).

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT!

Dear all staff at the Strand Centre

Thank you for all your help and support over the last Term enabling our students to develop their work and life skills. Your patience and generosity makes a huge difference to the futures of all the young adults at Oakwood Court College. The opportunities you offer can really encourage our students into more independent and fulfilling lives. All the best and we look forward to seeing you after the college holidays.

I will be finishing at the college This Term but leave you in the very capable hands of Joe Todd who will be taking over the Work Experience co-ordination.

Thank you again.

David Commings

(Work Focused Tutor)

The Tuesday Lunch Club is run by Oakwood Court students. Attendance has gone down in recent months, which is disappointing for the students who benefit from this interaction with the public. Those who attend regularly see the young people change as they grow in confidence and experience. Often parents write moving letters of thanks for giving their young people a chance. So going to an enjoyable lunch to chat with friends can be an act of Christian love. Will you join the Club?

OFFERINGS AND OTHER SPECIAL INCOME

| Sunday Offerings* | | | Special Collections and Events | |
|-------------------|---------|--------|--|------|
| | 2014 | 2013 | | |
| July | £1,763 | £990 | Commitment for Life | £187 |
| Year (so far) | £12,116 | £5,206 | Sunday coffee money now goes to | |
| | | | the Centre which provides the coffee | |

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

HARVEST FESTIVAL



This month we celebrate Harvest. In our global world the seasons seem to have less significance - strawberries in January and winter fruits in June. In a way we need to think of every day as a day of harvesting. These prayers may help.

God of great generosity
 you created with reckless bounty
 you poured blessings into our lives:
 may we respond bountifully.
 With a spirit of generosity
 and wisdom to share wisely
 may we serve those in need.

God of harvest,
 you feed, equip and provide for us.
 Help us to be fruitful in service
 to you and others.
 Feed us, prune us and harvest us
 that our lives
 might bring glory to you.

Going up and growing up

This is a time of transition for many young people - going into school or college for the first time, or moving to a new class. Focus on one or two you know, or of families where there is now a spare bedroom because someone has just left home.

God of all Wisdom,
 we praise you for the adventure of learning;
 asking the hard questions,
 challenging our assumptions,
 firing our imaginations,
 and nurturing our faith.
 We pray for those moving into new places
 where they will learn and make new friends:
 lead them to your wells of living water,
 keep them safe and away from harm.
 and refresh them and us
 with the knowledge of your presence.
 Amen.

WORLD WAR 1

No Dawlish
 person was
 killed in action
 in September 2014. So
 there will be no services of
 Commendation held this
 month.



Details of several men who
 were killed in October and
 the Commendations will
 be available next month.

Don't forget the prayer board in the Chapel.

Prayer requests left there by Saturday morning will be printed in the weekly notices sheet. Thoughts can also be left in the book which is in the Chapel.

SERVICES IN SEPTEMBER



Sunday Morning Services at 10.30 unless otherwise stated

- | | | |
|-----------|-------------------------|---|
| 7 | Holy Communion | Revd Peter Killick § |
| 14 | Family Service | Jean Potter & Revd Roger Whitehead § |
| 21 | Harvest Festival | Revd Roger Whitehead § ** |
| 28 | Prayer for Healing | Revd Roger Whitehead § |

Other services

- 28 6.30 Iona Service** United with the Methodists in the Methodist Church
 ** *Note Harvest Festival and Prayer for Healing have been swapped around*

REGULAR CHURCH EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------|--|
| Tuesdays | 2.00 - 4.00 | Knit & Chat (9 th and 23 rd) § |
| Thursdays | 10.00 - 12.00 | Coffee and Kids Morning (Café with Toddler Group) § |
| | 2.30 - 3.30 | Keep Fit § |
| Fridays | 11.30 - 12.15 | Prayer Meeting † |
| | 5.30 - 6.30 | Choir practice § |

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

ADDITIONAL MEETINGS IN SEPTEMBER

(in the Strand Centre unless otherwise indicated)

- | | | | |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|---|
| Thurs | 4 | 12.30 | Churches Together Forum ¶ |
| Sat | 6 | 10.00 | Table Top Sale § |
| Fri | 12 | 7.30 | Filling Station , Shaldon School (lifts available) |
| Fri | 19 | 3.45 | Messy Church , Methodist Church Hall |
| | | 6.30 | Life, Love and Praise § |
| Sun | 21 | 12.30 | Harvest Lunch - bring and share § (see page 6) |
| Mon | 29 | 6.00 | Elders Meeting ¶ |

FOR FULL DETAILS OF USE OF THE STRAND CENTRE

see the weekly Notices sheet

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| for UCADD visit | www.ucadd.org |
| for the church visit | www.StrandChurch.org.uk |
| for the centre visit | www.StrandCentre.org.uk |