



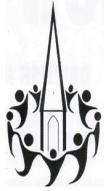
THE STRAND CHURCH, DAWLISH
(United Reformed)

ANNUAL REPORTS 2013



Opening and Dedicating the Kitchenette April 2013

MINISTER'S REFLECTIONS



The removal of the pews in 2012 was the first step in delivering the church's vision of becoming a community centre in the heart of the town. It opened up the building to many new uses and large numbers of people, who had never entered it for a church service, have come in. But the building continued to be limited by having only one (old) toilet and a very inadequate area for preparing hot drinks etc. This was put right in 2013 with the creation of the kitchenette and two toilets.

One of the principal aims of our vision then became a possibility – a drop-in café in the town centre. Its birth was fairly traumatic: after establishing the procedures etc Chris Canning resigned, and the situation was only saved by a small group of church people who committed themselves to keep the café going. This was the turning point. The appointment of Alethe Virgin as Manager secured the development of the café throughout the rest of the year.

By the end of 2013 the church building was increasingly seen in the town as a community centre. However, this has had no noticeable effect on church attendance, which declined slightly because of deaths and infirmity. This in turn reduced giving and the church was unable to meet its Ministry & Mission Fund target of £21,000 in 2013. A series of meetings with officials, some creative reworking of the figures and the support of the new Synod Moderator reduced the target (now called a 'guided target') to a manageable £13,000. We are very grateful for the sympathetic approach of the Synod, and we appreciate the quiet and thorough work done by Geoff Willis who followed Rychard Winslade as Church Treasurer at the beginning of the year.

The Synod officers were equally sympathetic when dealing with the £95,000 debt from the renewal of the roof. This was secured with the promise to sell the Strand Hall. The Elders Meeting explained to the Synod officers that the Strand Hall was essential for the development of the work of the Strand Centre and recognised by all the churches in Dawlish as a unique asset for the Christian community. The elders were unanimous that it ought not to be sold. The Synod officers suggested and Church Meeting agreed to sell half of the two-thirds share of the ownership to the Synod to clear the debt.

Unfortunately there was a lack of sympathy from the Listed Building Advisory Committee whose slow procedures and different ideas on the use of church buildings delayed consent for an external ramp at the front of the building and the creation of the Chapel. It was hoped that these would be completed in 2014.

Although the Strand Community Trust has leased most of the buildings and has taken on responsibility for the rest of the premises, the Strand Church remains responsible for the musical instruments in the building (organ and pianos) and (when it is created) the chapel. The Elders Meeting has been warned that the organ needs attention, and it was agreed to deal with this in 2014.

One of our joys in 2013 was the Service of Accreditation of June Wilson as a Synod-recognised lay preacher; she and the other members of the Worship Group lead worship three or four times a year.

During the year the prayer meeting continued on Fridays led by Anne Pemberton but the Bible Study group was no longer viable when commitments to the café reduced attendance. However, other groups whose reports follow continue to meet and play an important part in sustaining the fellowship and caring for others.

The Strand Church plays a significant part in the ecumenical life of the town through its active participation in Christian Aid Week, Churches Together in Dawlish and District and United Christian Action in Dawlish and District. The last two have pioneered deeper relations between the churches and increased cooperation in a number of ways, and it has enabled the Strand Church to be involved in different areas of Christian service which it could not have been undertaken alone.

Our congregation does not have the human resources or funding to do much more. In 2014 we will celebrate foundation of the church when a small group of Dawlish residents covenanted together to form a church which ultimately became Dawlish Congregational Church. We know little about them but given what Dawlish was then, they were likely to be poor and not very well educated. They (to quote St Paul) “gave themselves to the Lord and to one another” and against the odds and despite the discrimination then against Dissenters they flourished- an example to encourage us as we face the future.

Roger Whitehead

CHRISTIAN AID REPORT



A total amount of £9416.65 was raised in 2013 for Christian Aid by the Churches in Dawlish, which was up on 2012. For 2013 we, as a Church, did not do any house to house collections, but June Makey collected at Brunel Court and Margaret Hall collected at Stonelands Mews. The total raised by the Strand Church was £466.05 and the total for the two Lent Lunches was £249.01. Geoff and I would like to thank June and Margaret, and all who helped with the Lent Lunches.

We only did one Lent Lunch this year and raised a total £162.01, which included a raffle. Once again, a big thank you to the helpers, who did a marvellous job.

Geoff and Pat Willis

THE FLOWER GROUP

Once again this year we followed the general theme of the Church Calendar and the Seasons, interspersed with arrangements made to celebrate Special Occasions. In February Averil asked us to make an arrangement in memory of Crawford, her late husband and in March Elwyn and Joan celebrated their 65th Wedding Anniversary and requested that we made a floral arrangement to mark the occasion. Ray Humphreys gave a donation for flowers in June in loving memory of his wife Helen.



"Streams in the Desert"

It was a privilege to host the Women's World Day of Prayer in our Church this year. The material had been prepared on the theme *Streams in the Desert* by Christian women in Egypt

We were asked to arrange a large posy of brightly coloured flowers in a basket which was to be carried by the Leader of the Players as they processed down the aisle at the start of the service. June Wilson gave the address. Stella Hughes donated the flowers.

For the wedding of Adam Miles and Danielle Simmonds in April, all three of us made an arrangement of white flowers as requested by the bride and groom.

We thank all members who donated to the cost of decorating the Church this year.

Eric Carless, Marie Coulthard and Gwen Davies.

COFFEE AND KIDS

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Coffee & Kids has grown to a much bigger group recently – we regularly have 12 – 15 children with their grown-ups which makes for a busier time but great fun. We have an upper limit of 20 children. It's lovely to see the children that have been with us for over a year grow and develop their different interests and personalities. We met in the hall during the building work but we then moved into the auditorium after the Easter break which was much better.



Many visitors to the café enjoy watching the children play, and parents can enjoy a chat and their cup of coffee.

Marie Whitehead and Jan Adams

KNIT AND CHAT GROUP

The group re-started on April 9th 2013 after the opening of the New Inspire Cafe. Since then we have made 90 jumpers, 25 blankets, 27 purses and 84 small dolls and teddies for the orphans we support in Malawi.



We had an extraordinary meeting on March 18th this year when we were joined by the Knitters from Ashburton. Jean Potter introduced the speaker Mrs Mary Woodworth and her husband. Mary told us how she started Friends Of Mulanje Orphans in Malawi.

From one small Orphans Centre it has developed into 13 large centres staffed partly by qualified teachers and also by numerous International volunteers. Mary and her husband described the new school which is being built and proudly showed us photographs of some of the children at work and play. In particular we were impressed by the new computer laboratory and a very smart staff room. All the furniture was second-hand and had been donated by a school in UK which was being re-organised. We all thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon and are most grateful to Jean for bringing this lovely couple to speak to us.

Pam Green

THE STRAND CHURCH
Income & Expenditure Accounts
Income & Expenditure For The Year Ended 31st December 2013

Income	31-Dec-13		31-Dec-12	
	£	£	£	£
Offerings & Communion	16,854		19,487	
Gift Aid	3,271		6,245	
Donations	450		3,977	
Income from Investments	16		16	
Rent for Manse	5,767		2,533	
Church & Hall Lettings	0		0	
Refurbishment fund	0		460	
Income from Church Activities	662		2,974	
Outside Causes	1,240		1,445	
Weddings & Funerals	362		43	
Grant	650		0	
Sundry	50		0	
Gross Profit		29,322		37,179
Interest Received		40		0
Expenses				
Ministry & Mission	13,000		13,536	
Ministers Expenses	0		2,185	
Pulpit Supply	112		177	
Strand Community Trust	35		47	
Services	0		0	
Transport	0		288	
CCLI / MRL	111		68	
Organist	0		0	
Gratuities & Gifts	5		10	
Major Maintenance	0		3,110	
Minor Maintenance	74		359	
Organ & Piano Tuning	0		180	
Rent	5,190		5,617	
Stationary & Adverts	904		958	
Water	0		0	
Insurance	1,391		1,003	
Heat, light & power	0		0	
Cleaning	0		0	
Telephone	0		419	
Accountancy	420		410	
Bank Charges	0		0	
Miscellaneous	2,380		924	
Outside Causes	1,780		796	
Refurbishment costs	2,825		0	
Loan Charges for the year	1,420		2,884	
Total expenses		29,647		32,969
<u>Surplus or Deficit</u>		<u>-285</u>		<u>4,210</u>

The full accounts are available on request to Geoff Willis or Roger Whitehead.

THE STRAND CHURCH
Income & Expenditure Accounts
Balance sheet as at 31st December 2013

	31-Dec-13		31-Dec-12	
	£	£	£	£
Non Tangible Fixed Assets	0		0	
Fixed Assets	0		0	
	<u>0</u>		<u>0</u>	
Current Assets				
Debtors	2,000		2,000	
Shares	306		306	
Prepayments	0		433	
Bank Refurb Fund	715		615	
Bank Instant Access	802		2	
Bank current A/c	2,777		4,110	
Cash on hand	0		0	
	<u>6,601</u>		<u>7,466</u>	
Total Assets		6,601		7,466
Current Liabilities				
Bank Overdraft	0		0	
Trade Creditors	2,673		2,673	
Accruals	0		0	
Loans	1,894		3,894	
Loans Synod	96,106		94,686	
	<u>100,673</u>		<u>101,253</u>	
		<u>-94,073</u>		<u>-93,787</u>
Financed by				
<u>Retained Funds b / fwd</u>		-93,787		-97,998
Surplus / (Deficit) for the Period		-285		4,210
<u>Retained Funds c / fwd</u>		<u>-94,073</u>		<u>-93,787</u>

I have approved the above Balance Sheet and attached Profit and Loss Account and I have made available all relevant records and information for preparing these accounts.

Signed: _____
Treasurer



Date: 17th March 2014

Name: Mr Geoff Willis

THE STRAND COMMUNITY TRUST



Although the Strand Community Trust is a legally separate body from The Strand Church it provides the home of The Strand Church and so we include a brief report on 2013 from its trustees.

During 2013 the trustees of the Strand Community Trust have focused on three main concerns.

Buildings

In December 2012 the Strand trustees agreed to a £57,000 contract to create the two toilets and kitchenette. The trustees recognised that they did not have the money to meet the professional bills of about £12,000 but there was a danger that they would lose one of the major grants if there were further delays. The result was that the building work was completed by April 2013 but the trustees have been struggling to repay a debt of around £15,000. The situation was made more difficult by the resignation of Martin Charlesworth at the end of the year, and the trustees are immensely grateful to Anne Pemberton who has acted as the Trust's book keeper, and to Geoff Willis who completed the VAT returns during the year. At the end of 2013 we were delighted to be able to appoint Bob Baker (a member of Dawlish Christian Fellowship) as Treasurer from the start of 2014.

There was no money available to equip the café, and the trustees were humbled by the hugely generous response to its Epiphany Appeal when over £5,500 was raised and the Inspire Café has been well equipped.

Lack of money has meant that there have been few improvements to the building (apart from what was done in the foyer). This is unlikely to be possible in 2014 where some major works will be necessary.

Uses

The Centre's *raison d'être* is to be used by the community. Many of our users are themselves charities expecting favourable letting charges which presents a dilemma. And there is no doubt that the country's financial situation has had an effect of lettings. There was only one children's party in 2013 and the Third Age Group cancelled its lease on the top floor after over 20 years of occupation.

Strenuous but fruitless efforts were made to find an alternative user. On the other hand the number of table top sales and concerts has increased. The challenge in 2014 will be greatly to increase use. There is no doubt that the kitchenette and toilet have made the building more attractive and the number of users is slowly increasing. During the year the Café made some contribution to the running costs but not enough to meet its share. We hope to be able to boost the café's trade – but we will need more dedicated volunteers to do this.

The Inspire Café

The most encouraging sign is that the directors of United Christian Action in Dawlish and District (UCADD) has identified the centre as 'the shop window for all the churches in Dawlish' and expects to use it as its base as its work develops.

We are grateful for all the help given to the Centre in 2013. Thank you.

The trustees

MESSY CHURCH

It's been another messy and fun filled year! But we were reminded by the National Messy Church movement that we are "a church for families". So we took a two month break and started again in March 2013 with family groups only. Messy



Church is not meant to be a children's club but a Church for families who may not feel able to come to traditional Church on a Sunday. So we now have activities for adults and a 'Big Question' discussion area where anyone can talk about deeper faith issues. Our first 'new-style' Messy Church had 40 participants and chairs for all which meant everyone sitting round the tables together, sharing and being busy!

Messy Church is the main piece of work we do with the Methodist Church and we use their hall because they have a better kitchen in which to prepare a cooked meal.

If anyone feels they can come to pass on their craft/knitting/sewing skills for one session we'd be very happy to see you.

Marie Whitehead, Pam Mann, Pat Willis, Jean Potter, Jan Adams, Christine Hattersley

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2014



Women's World Day of Prayer took place on Friday, 7th March 2014 and was held in the Strand Church. The theme this year was 'Streams in the Desert' which was put together by the women of Egypt.

There was a very good turnout from all the local churches, some of whom took part in the service. We were very pleased to welcome Mrs Mary Lowther, our Mayoress and Councillor Ros Prowse (Chair of Teignbridge District Council) at the service, and the speaker was our own Church Member, Mrs June Wilson.

Mrs Stella Hughes stepped down as representative from the Strand Church committee this year after a very long association with this particular service. Thank you, Stella, we will try and take it forward as best we can!!

Pat Willis

UNITED CHRISTIAN ACTION IN DAWLISH AND DISTRICT

UCADD was formed to complement Churches Together which provides united service and inter-church relations. Its job is to work with partners in the community on particular projects; funding is sought not from the churches but from grant making bodies and individuals of good will. It combines the human resources of churches, none of which could undertake these projects alone. So UCADD will put its version of street pastors on the streets by June 2014; will form a coalition of Teignbridge churches to provide a debt advisor working with Christians Against Poverty, and continue to support Kay Partridge working in schools on behalf of the churches. UCADD provides an Advice Centre for local traders offering one-to-one on all aspects of local business. UCADD shows that the churches are engaged in the community where there is need, which is a wonderful Christian example.



The UCADD trustees

CHOIR REPORT

2013 was another good year for the Choir. We are pleased that Anne Pemberton has joined us as an alto and we now have a good balance of voices. We enjoy singing the hymns and anthems and thank Elwyn for arranging the music.



Joan Jones



Work in the café starts before 9 am to ensure the kitchenette is clean, the tables ready to receive customers and the health checks are completed on the food. Clearing up after closure can take another 90 minutes, so some volunteers are present for six hours, often without a break if the café is busy. We aim to have four people serving, including one on the till and one available if possible to talk to customers, but we rarely have more than three. The work is demanding; it would be easier if we worked two shifts each day but to cover five days a week we would need upwards of 30 volunteers – more than there has ever been on the list. So our faithful volunteers are much appreciated.

It is clear that many customers like to talk – sometimes about the difficulties they have at home sharing personal issues and occasionally some ask for prayer. Visitors are intrigued by the building, asking whether there is still a worshipping congregation and that can lead on to a serious discussion about faith and life issues. So having time for them is an important aspect of the café's work.

The Café was named 'Inspire' not because of the spire on the building, but to reflect the hope that it will inspire people. It is hoped next year to develop activities in the afternoons, some of which will be 'inspiring' by addressing some of the issues faced by our older regular customers.

CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

On Christmas Day 56 guests and 14 helpers enjoyed a traditional Christmas lunch in the Auditorium. The turkey was cooked and kindly donated by 'Ducky Delish'. Donations also came from the Dawlish Rotary Club, the Strand Church and Sainsbury's – it was a real community event. Bill from Dawlish Taxis gave lifts to many of the guests and doubled up as Father Christmas giving everyone a goody bag to take home. Guests were treated to some lovely violin playing by Ali Foden. Other visitors included our local MP, Anne-Marie Morris, Chair of Teignbridge District Council (Ros Prowse) and the Mayor and Mayoress of Dawlish who also stayed to help out. Donations on the day from the guests totalled over £200 which went to Christian Aid.

Marie Whitehead

WHAT YOU CAN DO IN A TRANSFORMED BUILDING

Our church's commitment to the community

As part of our Christian witness and service, we offer our building as a community facility in order to encourage worship, fellowship, service, learning, entertainment and education for local residents and visitors.

