

# The Christian Community

Stroud Congregation Newsletter – June 2014

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## Contemplation

Would you rather be analysed or understood? Would you rather be known as a sum of parts or as a single whole Being? Would you rather be asked 'What *are you?*', or 'Who *are you?*'? Which of these two questions would promise to bring us closer to the Truth – closer to our Spirit Essence?

So too might we consider the way we meet other people; social phenomena; world phenomena... Behind all phenomena are Beings longing to be met!

Our intellect, that valuable fruit of The Fall, helps us well to separate and polarise, but is quite incapable of uniting. Uniting, grasping the whole, demands something quite unlike the intellect, a radically new Thinking. This is the call of John the Baptist! – '*Metanoiete!*' – in the original Greek best rendered as '*Change your Thinking!*' Learn to let go of your fascination with the parts. Liberate yourself from the powerful, intellectual drive to 'label' the world; free yourself from the yoke of brain-bound thinking! Seek the Thinking of the heart!

This is the greatest challenge we face today as we longingly seek solutions to the complex riddles of our time. This is the first step – *I must decrease* – towards learning to grasp the whole with true understanding. Only then can we truly listen, truly hear what the Beings of the world would ask of us. Then might we begin to discern true solutions from the hidden Spirit Essence behind each person, each political event, each thing we encounter – true answers to the question we learn to nurture in our hearts: '*Who are you really?*'

...and then, having begun discern, we make ready to serve...

Aaron

## **New Development Group Update**

Soon after starting as our project manager, Geoff Haslam suggested that it would be essential to have a Project Board whose task it would be to sign off each stage of the project as and when the design team had completed their work. At one of our meetings in March it was therefore decided that Tom Ravetz, Rosie Philpott, Aaron Mirkin and myself should serve on the Board.

Since the last update, the design team have completed much of their work on Stage 4, and some of this was shared at the recent Project Board meeting on June 5<sup>th</sup>, when the acoustics engineer and the mechanical and electrical engineer presented their work. For those of us who are still new to a large building project, it has been amazing to experience the complexity of technical detail that the professionals have to get right in order not only to satisfy the client, but also the authorities. Aaron and myself experienced this when we were invited to attend two of the design team's meetings in Bristol. On both occasions we were aware of the enthusiasm the engineers have developed for this project, inspired to a large degree by Nic Pople's fine design of our future church.

As I write this, we are hoping to complete Stage 4 later this summer, all depending on the available finances which the Fund Raising Group are working at.

Peter Ramm

## **Telephone Tree**

I have at last managed to update the Telephone Tree, which had already become out of date since I amended it last year. Now that so many people use email, there are fewer people who rely on the Telephone Tree, but some names have been added to help it to work properly.

If you are one of the people whose name appears on the Tree, you will have received a copy of the new Telephone Tree with this Newsletter and the new Programme.

Paul

## New Development Fundraising

Richard Brinton stood back from the NDF group recently. Thank you, Richard, from all of us for the time (and the many long emails) you gave to this project! The NDF group now consists of five members who are Richard Matthews, Piet Blok, our two priests Carmel and Aaron, and Corinna Mainberger.

Keith Mitchell, an experienced fund raising consultant in Gloucester & district, and an advisor for VCA (Volunteer and Community Action), has run a motivational afternoon workshop with the NDF group which was joined by two guests, Andrea Flack and Mickey Green. This will lead into a more in-depth training workshop *'How to approach local wealthy individuals or companies to support our new development financially'*. Keith also very kindly and generously offered us assistance in writing funding applications to potential suitable donors. Paul Abel will take on this task.

Furthermore we have found Leo Saunders, a graphic-designer, who equally kindly has given us a very reasonable quote to design our stationery, brochure, business cards and artwork, which will be the basis for our (coming soon) online-donation website. And there will finally be a logo! All to make this project of ours as visible as possible to the wider world.

Corinna

## The Festival Group

An interest has been expressed in families with children having the opportunity to spend time together, sharing food and conversation while their children played. Therefore the following two dates are being put forward: **Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July at 1.00pm** and **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September at 1.00pm** for bring and share lunches. Although primarily aimed at families with children everyone is welcome to join in.

The Festival Group would welcome new members. This valued committee has the opportunity to hear talks and ask questions about each of the festivals while the organising and preparation offers insights as to how to prepare for them at home.

Please contact Carmel (07791 314215) or Jennifer (07866 216065) for more information.

# Spring Fair Takings

updated 13<sup>th</sup> June 2014

Activity	Takings	Costs	Net
Salad Bar	239.70	46.89	192.81
Barbeque	256.05	119.51	136.54
White Elephant	482.36	0	482.36
Ice Cream	141.00	99.00	42.00
Café	270.47	16.00	254.47
Jam & Crafts	190.71	0	190.71
Plants	42.50	0	42.50
Pizza Oven	72.50	37.51	34.99
Second-hand Books	169.57	0	169.57
Raffle	123.00	50.00 (Covered by donation)*	73.00
Puppet Show and Children's Events	280.85	99.00	181.85
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>2268.71</b>	<b>467.91</b>	<b>1800.80</b>
Contributions from other activities			80.00
Donations*			113.00
<b>Subsequent income</b>			
Car Boot Sale			54.70
Craft & Produce Sales			45.50
<b>SURPLUS</b>			<b>£ 2094.00</b>

Paul