

Imagine!

Imagine every holiday is a holy day!



Imagine you could see God's face! Some of us might find that a blasphemous thought! After all, don't we read in the old testament: "You cannot see my face, for no-one may see me and live"? (Exodus 33:20). But if we can't see His face how will we recognise Him when we meet Him?

In William Paul Young's novel 'The Shack' the central character Mack does recognise Father God when he meets Him, but is taken by surprise to find 'Him' to be a rather plump Afro-American mother figure bustling around in the kitchen and making rather delicious cakes! Why not emphasise God's loving nature as one who wants to cuddle us in 'Her' big bosom? At first this seems quite novel and interesting to the reader, but does it really help to carry this image around with us any more than the stern Father figure portrayed by Michelangelo's Sistine chapel ceiling?

Surely there is a reason that God is unknowable? If he was knowable he would be just another phenomenon of the world. Wittgenstein said "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent". He hinted that there is a part of reality that is so holy and mysterious that we can't talk about it or imagine it. And yet we are called to make God and His love known throughout the world. How can this happen if He is unknowable? John declares "No one has ever seen God; the only Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known". If we draw closer to Jesus and observe what he says about God's nature in his teaching and through his dying and resurrection, we will be able to recognise God when we meet Him.

He might be a long way from a big black lady in a kitchen but He will be overflowing with love and graciousness as shown through the giving of His Son Jesus - His greatest gift to us.

Alan Wheeler

What's on in August

Worship at Stansted Free Church

2nd	10.30 am	The Worship team New Directions in Worship
9th	10.30 am	Janet Bottoms
16th	10.30 am	Rev Allen Morton Holy Communion
23rd	10.30 am	Denis Walker
30th	10.30 am	Maureen Kendall

Other Activities

Sun 2nd	11.30 am	Fairtrade goods on sale after service
Thu 6th	12.00 pm	Bible studies begin at Water Lane URC
Sun 9th	11.30 am	Farewell to Janet & Brian
Tue 11th	10.00 am	Church Oversight Group 7 Blythwood Gardens
Sun 30th	11.30 am	Fairtrade goods on sale after service

Farewell

Janet & Brian have finally exchanged contracts and will be moving during August. Please join us for coffee after the service on Sunday 9th August, when we shall be formally saying "goodbye". They will both be very much missed.

Advance Notices

4 pm Saturday 5th September
Saffron Walden Methodist Church

Welcome to Rev David Keeble as Minister

3.30 pm Sunday 6th September
Stansted Free Church

Church Anniversary followed by tea

Pilots

For our last Pilot meeting in June, we walked to the Recreation Ground where we had a picnic and played rounders. We all had a great time, including one of our ministers, Rev. Allen Morton, who joined in with all the fun.

You have probably noticed the balloons hanging on the walls of the Lecture Hall. These are partially finished magic bowls and will have to remain where they are until we can complete them in September! By the time that you read this article we will have had another attempt at gluing more newspaper around the balloons in order to make a stronger base for the bowls. They will then have to dry off and harden over the Summer holiday!! When we return on 14th September, we hope to complete the project. The story of the *Magic Bowl* has a moral to it, and some of our older Pilots will be writing this out ready to put on the notice board in the front porch - so watch this space!

Many thanks to Cherry who provided us with a lovely picnic when we had games on the 'Rec' and also for some special food on our last evening of the Summer term. During the evening, the Pilots brought their collections to share with one another, and those who had taken part in the stamp project received their packets of stamps ready to go into an album. Collectors and Interest Seals will be put into the Pilot Log Books and given out on the first evening of next term.

Pilot Dates for next term (Mondays 6 pm): 14th & 28th September; 12th October; 2nd, 16th & 30th November; 7th December. All members and friends are invited to visit us on any evening.

Valerie 813443

Lunch time Bible Studies at Water Lane United Reformed Church

Theme: Light on the Gospels

Discover: What are distinctive spiritualities of the four Gospels?

Where: In the Welcoming Area

When: Each Thursday during August 12 - 12.45 pm

Food: Bring your own lunch

Stansted Free Church

Methodist / URC

www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Contacts

(All telephone numbers are 01279)

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Sunday Service

10.30 am Morning Worship

New Directions - our bi-monthly service in a less formal style

Children's Work

Alternate Mondays 6 pm Pilots for children aged 5 - 18 years.

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