

Imagine!

August
2012



Imagine competing in the Olympic Games. It must be particularly stressful if your fame goes before you like Andy Murray or Usain Bolt. Imagine the pressure to fulfil the hopes and dreams of your fans and family; your every action and comment being analysed by the media as they compete for a winning scoop. You might consider hiding from the glare of publicity in order to allow time for mental and physical preparation. However, that would just stimulate rumours that you have sustained an injury or have been caught out by a drugs test. The most successful competitors are those who believe in their own ability to win and are eager to share it with the world. Imagine the reaction if Andy suggested that, as he didn't win at Wimbledon, he wasn't expecting to get far in the Olympic tennis either. Imagine the reaction if Usain reminded people that he messed up in 2008, so there was a good chance he would make another false start in 2012.

The origins of the ancient Olympic Games are not clear, but they were well established by the 5th century BC and were still held in Athens every four years (an Olympiad) when Jesus walked the earth. Although the Bible does not refer to the Olympic Games explicitly, Paul used their vocabulary in several of his letters. 1 Corinthians 10 v24 – 27 contains a powerful analogy between the discipline of an athlete and that of a Christian; Romans 8 v37 even refers to Nike, but not as sponsors! The Greek word 'nike' is now variously translated as 'overwhelming victory' or 'more than conquerors', but it was originally personified by the Greek goddess Nike, the goddess of victory. Her Roman equivalent was Victoria. Paul's message is as timeless as the Olympic Games themselves, and is as challenging to us as it was to his readers. Our aim should always be to win; yes, it involves personal commitment and sacrifice, but the heavenly reward is more valuable than any gold medal. Just imagine what it will be like when we cross the finish line and Jesus is there to greet us!

Mike Dyer



Care Time



Please pray for the Rev'd James Gasgoigne as he leads our worship on 5th August, and as we seek God's way forward for our church. We remember those who need our love and support: Arthur Law, Cherry Lewis, Michelle King, Doris Lambdon; for the Richards family preparing for Ava's baptism; any of our wider church family who need our prayers; and those no longer able to attend church. We also pray for the staff of Bishop's Stortford YMCA as they seek to help residents with challenging issues such as breakdown of family relationships, lack of motivation, and alcohol and substance misuse.

Wanted - Knitting Wool

Saffron Walden Methodist Knit and Natter group need bright coloured double knitting wool to make items for shoeboxes. The ladies are very keen and knit throughout the year. If anybody has any wool - small or large amounts - please call Fran Keeble on 01799 522037 or leave the wool at Stansted church.

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The next edition of **Imagine** will be available on Sunday 26th August. Please submit articles by Friday 18th August to: news@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk. Alternatively, please pass to one of the editors, or send to:

23A Bentfield Road, Stansted CM24 8HP. Thank you.

Editors: Alan Wheeler and Mike & Marion Dyer

Copies of this and previous editions of Imagine can be found on our website www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

What's on in August

Worship at Stansted Free Church

5th 10.30 am Joint Service at Water Lane URC (see below)
12th 10.30 am Rev'd Tim Richards - Baptism of Ava Richards
followed by bring and share lunch. All welcome
19th 10.30 am Rev'd David Thompson - Holy Communion
26th 10.30 am Julie Finbow

Other Activities

Mon 6th 9.30 am Church Oversight Group 7 Blythwood Gardens

September - Advance Notice

Sunday 2nd September 3.30 pm Church Anniversary Service
followed by tea. There is no morning service on that day.

Vacancy Update

By the time you read this, hopefully you will have met Rev'd James Gasgoigne at the church social. The next stage is to hear Jim 'preach with a view', which will be at 10.30 am on Sunday 5th August at Water Lane URC, Bishop's Stortford. After this, both churches have to meet as soon as is practicable to reflect and decide whether to issue a call to Jim to come and work with the churches from September 2012 to September 2013.

Murray George, our Interim Moderator, suggests that we do this in the early afternoon of the same day. There will be a break after the service for people to have their sandwiches, drink and chat, and Murray will join us between 12.30 and 1 pm. I know this might not be easy for some, but it will avoid having to turn out for another meeting later in the day or the next evening, so we do hope you will bear with us over this. The meeting is open to anyone to attend and speak but only church members may vote. It will be a secret ballot, and each church will have different coloured voting papers. If you need or can offer transport please let me know.

Betty

Jubilee Celebrations

THE FREE CHURCHES IN STANSTED THROUGH THE YEARS

Exhibition of photographs and other memorabilia depicting the life of Stansted Methodist and Stansted United Reformed (formerly Congregational) churches over the past 60 years



Part of the display in the church organised by Peter, Valerie and others

Weddings and Baptisms organised by Judy and Marion



The Music Group helped to create a welcoming atmosphere

in Stansted



Peter, Valerie, Arthur and Sanjit set up a large display of Pilot activities throughout the years

The Pilots created this Olympic Display



Thank you

Warm thanks to all who devised, prepared and set out the excellent show of memorabilia and recent photos of our church activities for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee exhibition, 'The Free Churches in Stansted through the years'. We hope the many visitors appreciated the excellent presentation.

Phyllis Harrison

Jubilee Celebrations

Trip to London to see the Flotilla.

Marion and Ted Pretty and I were lucky enough to be offered tickets on a coach to see the Thames Pageant on Sunday 3rd June. We set off in drizzling rain equipped with rainwear and scarves and brollies, wondering if we were quite mad. None of us had ever dared to brave the crowds like this before. A really easy journey to Blackfriars Road and we were dropped off at the Bridge about 11 am with instructions on when and where to return and "Don't be late because I can't hang about!"



Toilet facilities were plenty on the Bridge and then we were down the steps and amazingly found a place at the embankment wall, only one line of people in front, who had been there since 7 am! The atmosphere was wonderful, full of excitement and pride in what our



country can produce on these occasions. People soon came behind us and we were surrounded mostly by younger people, who made us laugh and seemed to carry an enormous amount of food and drink with them. People in the building behind, which

sheltered us a bit from the wind and drizzle, gathered on the balcony wearing royal masks and playing music to which we all sang.

in London

The pub just 50 yards up the road did a roaring trade in coffee and tea as well as beer, and we were able to use their toilets if needed.

Across the water was a huge screen showing what was going on further down the river and another on Blackfriars Bridge to our right, and a wonderful view of St Paul's Cathedral.

The procession was due past us at about 2.30 pm with over a thousand boats, comprising rowing boats, working boats, pleasure boats etc making a flotilla nearly seven miles long. We waved our flags, and cheered and 'oo-hed' and 'aa-hed' at the musical barges with their choirs and orchestras, and at the Dunkirk little ships, the biggest contingent, and the small blue and white boats bearing the flags of the Commonwealth.



The Spirit of Chartwell carrying the Queen and decorated with thousands of blooms was led by the royal barge and when this

appeared our young friends poured out the champagne and we all sang 'God Save the Queen'.

One million people lined the banks of the river and we were there too!



Judy Colliver

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Sunday Service

10.30 am Morning Worship

Children's Work

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

Valerie Trundle Tel 813433 Email: pilots@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk