



I imagine my delight! “You will come?” she said. That’s my sister of course. We were on holiday with her in Spain and were invited to a dinner with family and friends. It was a pleasure to accept.

So there we were, sitting next to her husband Miguel, and other guests were sitting further down the table. Miguel was busy conversing with a guest from Valencia, when my sister turned to me and whispered, “You won’t understand this. They are talking in Valencian dialect”. I didn’t let on that I would have struggled to have understood if they had been talking schoolboy Spanish let alone a local dialect!

That got me thinking. Now, we like to have visitors in church but how many know what is going on? Don’t we tend to talk another dialect which we assume everyone understands. What with ‘bread and wine’ when they were expecting sandwiches, and ‘Son of Man’ when they thought it was all about ‘Son of God’; when to stand; when to close the eyes; when to say “Amen” and so on.

What I am getting at is that we should imagine how it is to be in their shoes. If our practices seem odd and uncomfortable to them isn’t it likely that they will be frightened away? In an age when being in a church service is a strange experience to many people who otherwise may be more than ready to hear Jesus’ call, perhaps we need to rethink how we speak the gospel to them in the dialect they are comfortable with.

William Frogley



Care Time



Please remember in your prayers Bessie Armitage who is seriously ill in hospital in Scotland and the family of Raymond Platts who has recently died.

Congratulations to Judy and Herbert Colliver on the birth of a new grandson Hamish and to his parents Joanne and Craig who live in Australia with sister Katie who was baptised by Revd David Simpson when they were home last time in April 2006, and to Catherine and Alan Dean and their new grandson Alfie and to his proud parents Alice and Jon.

Congratulations also to our Secretary Betty on her special birthday this month (catching up with Mike & Catherine!).

Finally we send our best wishes to Gladys Dix for a trouble free move to her new home, as she leaves Alderbury Road after 10 years and moves to 39 Mead Court at the beginning of July. Her telephone number will remain the same. We hope you will be very happy there Gladys.

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The next edition of **Imagine** will be available on Sunday 27th July. Please submit articles by Friday 18th July 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 July

Sunday Worship at Stansted Free Church

6 th	10.30 am	The Worship Team – My yoke is easy
	2.30 pm	Sarah Devereux
		<i>followed by tea in the foyer - all welcome</i>
13 th	10.30 am	Rev Stuart Veitch - Holy Communion
20 th	10.30 am	Rev Allen Morton
27 th	10.30 am	Rev Gillian Taylor

Morning worship is followed by coffee except the first Sunday in the month, when tea is usually served following the afternoon service.

Please join us!

Other Activities

Sun 6 th	3.30 pm	Outreach Tea
Mon 7 th	8.00 pm	Shalom at 7 Blythwood Gardens Plays and Party
Mon 14 th	2.30 pm	Monday Club in the Hall
	6.00 pm	Pilots in the Hall
Tue 22 nd	8.00 pm	Church Meeting in the Hall

Islands of Prayer

Sat 6th September 10 am - 4 pm

Chrishall Methodist Church

Music, prayers and readings led by Brenda & Stuart Veitch

See posters & booking forms on the noticeboard

We are pleased that Allen & Daphne no longer have to commute from Burnham as they have now moved to the new Manse in Bishop's Stortford. We wish them every happiness there.

Their address is: 39 Clover Avenue, Bishop's Stortford CM23 4BW

At the time of writing, the telephone (and email) has not been connected, so please contact Janet or Betty if you need to get in touch with Allen urgently.

From the Secretary

New Synod Moderator

As you know Elizabeth Caswell retired from her role as Synod Moderator in May. Her successor is the Rev Paul Whittle, and his induction is 3 pm on Saturday 6th September at Christ Church, Chelmsford, followed by tea. Seats are limited to two per church. If you would like to represent Stansted Free Church please let me know by 30th July, and I shall take the first two names that I'm given. There is limited parking at Christ Church. After August 1st any remaining seats will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

REFORM (the magazine of the URC) re-launches with a new look in July and we shall have a number of free copies at the church.

Dates for your diary

The first Sunday in September (7th) will be our second anniversary. We will not have a morning service on that day, and the afternoon service will be at 3 pm (followed by tea), when both our ministers will take part. As well as our own Harvest Festival on 21st September, there will be CTS celebrations for Harvest (something we haven't done for several years) on the afternoon of 12th October. Incidentally the new CTS forum is open to everyone and is well worth attending. The next one is at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 16th July in the Quaker Meeting House.

As mentioned at the last meeting, we are trying to arrange for Church Meetings to be on the same day on alternate months, which will make it easier to remember when the meetings are and enable us to plan our diaries. When I did a poll last year, the day preferred by the majority of members was Tuesday evening. To fit in with the ministers' commitments to their other churches, the Church Oversight Group suggested that we hold Church Meetings on the **second Tuesday** at 8 pm (starting from September). The dates for the next 12 months are:

July 22nd
September 9th (AGM)
November 11th
January 13th
March 10th
May 12th
July 14th

I'm afraid we'll never find a day that will suit everyone but we hope these dates will suit as many people as possible.

Betty

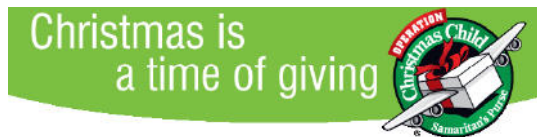
From the Church Oversight Group

Church Deacon Vacancy

We have six deacons who represent the church members, and are elected for an initial term of six years. At the Annual Church Meeting, one of the deacons steps down, and although he or she could be re-elected for a further six years, this is an opportunity to draw someone new into this very important role in our church life.

The Church Oversight Group (or COG as it is affectionately known) comprises the six deacons, the joint treasurers, the secretary and the ministers. At the present time, the secretary also happens to be a deacon, but this will not necessarily be the case in the future. We meet every four to six weeks to discuss any issues concerning the running of the church, finance, pastoral concerns, etc. If any major decisions need to be made, the Oversight Group will normally discuss them and then bring a proposal to the Church Meeting. This year Janet Townsend will be stepping down and we would ask all church members to prayerfully consider whether they should take on this role. If you would like to know more about what is involved, please speak to one of the present deacons: Valerie, Catherine, Mike, Betty, Janet, and Marion (Pretty).

Anyone wishing to be considered must be nominated by another church member. Please hand any nominations to Betty by the end of August.



This week I received details of this year's Operation Christmas Child shoe box appeal. The message for this year's campaign is BE BOLD and THINK BIG and aim to beat last year's record of over 1.3 million boxes which were sent from the UK to Children in hospitals, orphanages, refugee camps, homeless centres and poverty stricken neighbourhoods in many parts of the world. We will be having our usual shoe box packing coffee evening in November but as you go around this summer watch out for items that can be included in the boxes; but DO NOT forget, NO glass or liquids or books with words. More details of restrictions next time when I have the new leaflets, but please start shopping now and lets see if we can beat last year's total of 330 boxes from Stansted.

Janet Townsend

Ride and Stride



This year's Ride and Stride for the Friends of Essex Churches Trust is on Saturday 13th September. Last year over £105,000 was raised for local churches and the Trust to help preserve our heritage. We received grants for our Church redevelopment and the hall modernization from this fund, so if anyone would like to help this worthy cause by walking or cycling, sponsorship forms are in the foyer. Don't forget our Church receives half the money raised from your sponsorship and the rest goes to the Trust. Walk round Stansted village and you can visit 5 churches. Nearer the time I will be asking for volunteers to welcome people to the church throughout the day, so please book the date in your diary now.

Janet

From the Moderator, United Reformed Church, Whittlesford

Dear Friends

I would like to convey to the members of the Eastern Synod my deep gratitude for your generosity and affection demonstrated by the farewell tea and service on 17 May and by your extraordinarily generous gifts. The picture of the Bridge of Sighs in Cambridge will be a lasting reminder of eleven and a half happy years living in such a beautiful city and serving the four counties of the Synod, each so lovely in their own way. The cheque which accompanied the picture was overwhelming, and Graham and I are deeply grateful for your kindness. It has been joy enough to share in the work with you and to enjoy your friendship, but this practical expression of your care is very special.

I always think that friendship is elastic - there is always more affection to give, and although I shall be blessed with new friends in a new pastorate I know that my heart will retain its remembrance and love for the Eastern Synod, and the kettle is on if ever any of you is passing! With renewed thanks and a prayer that God will richly bless your continuing ministry in His name in the years to come.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Caswell

Pilots

Meetings for the remainder of this term Mondays 6 - 7.30 pm:

30th June Christian Aid - Catherine Dean (local representative)

14th July Jan & Roger with guide dog Dipper

Fairtrade at Pilots
with Brenda Veitch



In June Brenda came to Pilots to talk to us about Fairtrade. We began the evening by talking about how we in the Western world have so much more in the way of clean water, fresh food, nice clothes and good medical care. We thought about the many people who do not have these things and we talked about how fortunate we are as children to live in this country.

We played a game which showed that if we were more generous other people would have a better standard of living.

After that we watched part of a video showing people in different countries picking the food that eventually comes to us. The whole session made me feel that we should care about other people in the underdeveloped countries and try to buy the food and goods that have the Fairtrade label on them.

Before we went home Brenda gave us a Fairtrade chocolate bar which was delicious! We thanked Brenda very much for coming.

Abigail King

Please note

Jan's guide dog, coming to visit us on 14th July is named Dipper and not Ripper as printed in Imagine last month (not a good name for a guide dog, or any dog come to that!!) so members and friends of the church don't be afraid to join us, you are most welcome.

Valerie

Stansted Free Church

Methodist / URC
www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

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Sunday Services

1st Sunday in each month

10.30 am New Directions in Worship
An informal, participative service for all ages
2.30 pm Afternoon Worship
followed by outreach tea

All other Sundays

10.30 am Morning Worship

Children's Work

Alternate Mondays

6 pm Pilots for children aged 5 - 18 years. Tel 813433