

Imagine!

Imagine being
'The Speaker'

Stansted Free Church



I magine being a teenager again - yes it's very hard isn't it?!! But if you can, just imagine being a teenage girl (sorry men!) on a night out with your friends, and you've told your parents not to pick you up because you have a lift home with your friends, so they have gone out for the evening too. Imagine you have a disagreement with the friend who drives the car; so you leave the disco alone. Panic sets in as you realise you have to walk to the bus stop or taxi rank wearing flimsy clothes and high heeled shoes; then disaster strikes when the heel breaks on one of your shoes.

Imagine being the innocent victim of a mugging; someone has taken some of your possessions, and in the struggle has pushed you to the ground and you need an ambulance. Imagine two people fighting outside a pub; one of them ends up needing emergency first aid and the landlord is so fed up with all the fights that go on outside his pub that he is no longer willing to help.

Now imagine someone handing you a pair of flip flops when your heel breaks, and offering to escort you to the bus stop or taxi rank; or someone offering to call for an ambulance and stay with you until it arrives; or offering to give you first aid on your injured hand. Imagine that person is someone you can trust, someone safe. That someone is a 'Street Pastor', and we have such people patrolling the streets of Bishop's Stortford on Friday nights, until around 2 am.

Street Pastors is an inter-denominational Church response to urban problems, engaging with people on the streets to care, listen and dialogue. It began in London in 2003 and has seen some remarkable results, including less crime in areas where teams have been working (including Bishop's Stortford). There are now over 100 teams around the United Kingdom. Each project is set up by Ascension Trust and run by a local co-ordinator with support from Ascension

Trust and local churches (support is required from a minimum of four churches for each new project) and community groups, in partnership with Police, Council and other statutory agencies. As the Street Pastors get to know people in the community they find out what their needs are and what can be done to help. A presence of Street Pastors earns credibility in the community, so that people know that the Church is there for them in a practical way. The role is not about preaching heaven and hell, but one of listening, caring and helping - working in an unconditional way.

Street pastors are just 'ordinary' people who have received training to equip them for the many varied situations in which they may find themselves. Please remember them in your prayers from time to time, and if you would like further information about becoming a Street Pastor, please contact me or visit www.streetpastors.co.uk

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The next edition of **Imagine** will be available on Sunday 26th July. Please submit articles by Friday 17th 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

Worship at Stansted Free Church

- 5th 10.30 am Jerry Heyhoe
12th 10.30 am Gillian Taylor
19th 10.30 am Rev Allen Morton
Holy Communion
26th 10.30 am Rev Stuart Veitch

Morning worship is followed by coffee. All are welcome.

Other Activities

- Thu 2nd 7.30 pm Worship Leaders' Course in the Hall
Fri 3rd 2.30 pm Thanksgiving Service for Peter Thompson
St Michael's Church, Bishop's Stortford
Sun 5th 11.30 am Fairtrade goods on sale after service
6.30 pm Café Worship in the Church
Sun 12th 12.00 pm Farewell Lunch for Janet & Brian in the Hall
Mon 13th 6.00 pm Pilots in the Hall
8.00 pm Shalom at 7 Blythwood Gardens
Music, Poetry & Party
Tue 14th 8.00 pm Church Meeting in the Hall
Wed 22nd 7.30 pm Worship Leaders' Course in the Hall
Sun 26th 4.00 pm Farewell Service & tea for Rev Trevor Sands
Saffron Walden Methodist Church
Wed 29th 7.30 pm Churches Together in Stansted Forum in the Hall

Café Worship comes to Stansted Free Church

6.30 pm Sunday 5th July led by Rev Stuart Veitch

A Café style service with coffee during the service

Music led by Bishop's Stortford Methodist Church

Part of the Worship Leaders' Course, but open to all

Please join us!

2020 Vision

At the July Church Meeting there will be a presentation entitled 2020 Vision, followed by a discussion. 2020 vision usually describes perfect eyesight; it is also the strapline of a newly launched consultation process from the United Reformed Church Mission Council asking each local congregation to respond to the challenge: 'What will the United Reformed Church be like in 10 Years?' It is part of the Vision for Life process, where we are offered to re-engage in turn with the Bible, Prayer and Evangelism.

All main Christian denominations for decades seem to have been in a state of simply trying to manage decline, yet at the same time there are stories of churches large and small where there are evident signs of growth. Ten years ago two small, remote chapels in the Brecon Beacons faced the fact that they were fast reaching the end of the line: small congregations, decaying and unsuitable property, and little money. One congregation decided that if they were to have a future they needed to get out of their building, so they booked the village hall, hoping to start a new outreach. The other chapel decided to join them. The venture did not take off as had been hoped, but the links with another struggling United Reformed Church grew, one with a run-down chapel in a good location and lots of potential. So, they soon joined. Today the chapel attracts a regular congregation of about 30, has been totally refurbished and is buzzing with life. Letting go of the burdens and treasuring the riches of the past has resulted in an active, thriving fellowship. The unions released energy, human resources and money. Visitors comment on how lively and uplifting the worship is. This is one rural chapel which is growing - and fast. This story seems to have many resonances with the way that Stansted Free Church came to be.

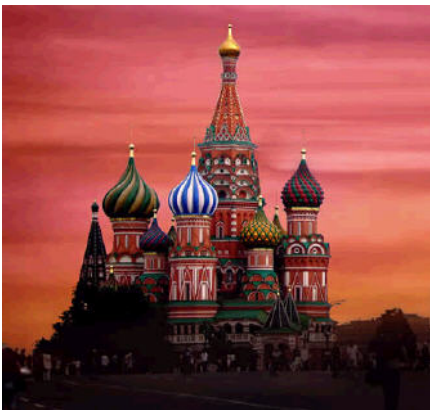
Within this consultation process about how the United Reformed Church as a whole is to move forward in the ten year period from 2010 to 2020, each local congregation is invited to make its own Local Mission Pledge and to send in this pledge to the Synod or the national church, and to review the pledge and either annually or bi-annually to assess how it is being fulfilled.

One suggested pledge might be to increase the Sunday morning attendance by 10% and church membership by 5%; another might be to get involved in the climate change campaign. There can be more than one pledge running at a time. The advantage of making such a pledge is that it helps a church to clarify its priorities over a given time. This is the question: 'If this church was to make a 'pledge' about what it felt inspired to achieve in the next 12 months what would it be?' Come to the Church Meeting on July 14th and share your ideas. As they say in Pilots, 'All hands on deck!'

Allen Morton

Ten Most Unique Churches

No 2 Saint Basil's Cathedral: The Red Square 's Colourful Church



The St Basil's Cathedral is located on the Red Square in Moscow, Russia.

A Russian Orthodox church, the Cathedral sports a series of colourful bulbous domes that taper to a point, aptly named onion domes, that are part of Moscow 's Kremlin skyline.

The cathedral was commissioned by Ivan the Terrible to commemorate the capture of the Khanate of Kazan. In 1588 Tsar Fedor Ivanovich added a chapel on the eastern side above the grave of Basil Fool for Christ, a Russian Orthodox saint after whom the cathedral was popularly named.

From Janet and Brian

I have always found it very difficult to write for Imagine (and before that the Messenger) but this is by far the most challenging. However I feel I must thank Betty for the very kind words she wrote last month; as she said, I have always been involved with the Church in some capacity (Brian's a relative newcomer as he's only been in Stansted 47 years) so the buildings, events and especially the people have played such a large part in our lives. It's going to be a big adventure to move away but we feel the time is now right to move on. Unfortunately as I write this we have not yet found another house to move into, so will have to lodge with Andrew and his family in Kingswinford for a while until we find a rental property for six months to enable us to really get a feel for the area.

When we have visited the family we have attended a United Reformed Church at Wall Heath where we have been made very welcome. It is part of a group of three churches with the Revd Jean Spragg (who we have yet to meet) as the minister and a congregation of 40-50 people at the morning service (they also have an evening service every week). Wall Heath itself is a large village in the West Midlands but within two miles you are in the Staffordshire countryside - a very pleasant area to explore and with the summer days ahead we hope to do this.

When we get settled if anyone is in the area we would love to see you - just give us a ring. We will be back to visit family from time to time so one day you might find us sitting in the seat just as if we haven't moved away.

Again thank you all for your kind words and love and support when times have been difficult; we won't forget you. God Bless you all.

Love and Best Wishes for the future of Stansted Free Church

Janet and Brian

A reminder of our farewell lunch for Janet and Brian on 12th July



The next Traidcraft stalls will be after the morning services on 5th July, 2nd August and 30th August.

Brenda Veitch 815819



Care Time



Please remember in your prayers all those undergoing or awaiting the results of medical tests. We continue to remember David Mullins whilst he is on sabbatical.

From the Secretary

Many thanks to those who took part in the Methodist World Mission Quiz and those who sold them to their friends. Stansted pulled out all the stops and sold 100 out of the 145 sold. After expenses for printing and the prize money, £113 was raised, so well done all of you, I knew you could do it! There were four all correct entries, Janet Wheeler and Katherine Poole both from Stansted, one from Braughing and one from Saffron Walden. The winner was drawn from these four - sadly the winner was not one of ours but Fiona and James Griffin from Saffron Walden.

We are having a 'bring and share' farewell lunch for Janet and Brian on Sunday 12th July following the morning service. Please could you let me have names by Sunday 5th and also an idea of what food you will bring so we can make sure we have a varied menu?

A reminder of the Church Meeting on July 14th at 8pm in the hall. Everyone is welcome to come and participate in the discussions but only members may vote. I hope by then you will have seen a copy of the booklet on Vision 2020 (see Allen's article); some extra copies are on order I will pass them round when they arrive.

Betty

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

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Brenda Veitch

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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.

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