

Imagine!

June
2011



Imagine living in a country like Libya, facing the wrath of a dictator who has, it seems, no compunction about destroying his own communities and the people he has ruled for so long. Imagine not having the freedom to express your own political views if they were critical of your government. We have recently had an election and a referendum, when we could freely express our preferences, and many told the coalition government just what they thought of them. Just think what it would be like not to be free to listen to political satire or make jokes about the Prime Minister or his colleagues. No 'That Was The Week That Was', nor 'Yes Minister'. How dull life would be!

Just imagine what it would be like to be unable to hold a protest meeting or a march, or to have to resist the invitation to join Amnesty International. All this because you had no political freedom.

We live in a country where it is so easy to take our freedoms for granted; where we can think and speak with relative impunity, and worship in confidence that we will not be persecuted. It is only when we see the situation in places like Libya that we are reminded of the value of these freedoms and the importance of free speech. With those freedoms comes responsibility, and as Christians that means speaking the truth, with love and yet with firmness. Our gospel is of good news about God's love and God's justice, and Christ depends on us to share that good news, and speak up for justice, especially for those throughout the world who are oppressed.

So we should give thanks with all our hearts for our freedoms; guard them jealously and use them responsibly. For the Kingdom of God depends on his people speaking out on behalf of the Kingdom, and, amazingly on behalf of the King himself.

Stuart Veitch



Care Time



Please remember any of our church family who need our prayers, including:

Allen Morton, our URC minister, who is on long term sick leave, and his wife Daphne; Doris Lambden, mother-in-law of Alan Wheeler, recovering from a major operation; Ivor Thomas, Chris Coetzee and those no longer able to attend Church.

Betty 813977

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

Worship at Stansted Free Church

- 5th 10.30 am The Worship Team - New Directions: Paul's Pearls
12th 10.30 am Rev'd David Keeble - Holy Communion
19th 10.30 am Jerry Heyhoe
26th 10.30 am Rev'd Janet Tollington

Other Activities

- Sun 5th 5.15 pm Tea and Easter Offering Service at
Bishop's Stortford Methodist Church
Mon 6th 6.00 pm Pilots in the Hall
Wed 8th 8.00 pm Local Preachers & Worship Leaders'
Communion Service in the Church
Sun 12th 11.30 am Fairtrade goods on sale after service
Mon 13th 8.00 pm Shalom discussion at 7 Blythwood Gardens
Mon 20th 6.00 pm Pilots in the Hall
Sat 25th 10.00 am Quiet Day at Chrishall Methodist Church
Mon 27th 7.45 pm Special Church Meeting in the Hall

Easter Offering Dedication Service

Sunday 5th June at Bishop's Stortford Methodist Church

5.15 pm Bring and Share Tea 6.30 pm Service

Speaker **Mike King** Connexional Leader of Methodist World Church

SPECIAL CHURCH MEETING - The Way forward

7.45 pm Monday 27th June

This is a very important meeting for everyone who is involved with our church. You do not have to be a church member to attend.

Please come along and join in the discussions.

See page 5 for full details.

Recent Church Services

New Directions

At the New Directions worship event on Mothering Sunday we explored some of the trials and tribulations of family life. We found many words that could be made up from the letters of 'Mothering Sunday', and focused on just a few of them. We concluded that, as God's children, we often behave in naughty ways that disappoint him, but like a loving mother he hugs and forgives us!



Lenten Cross



Each Sunday throughout Lent we added symbols to the Lenten cross, such as a bowl, towel, crown of thorns, hammer and nails to remind us of Jesus' suffering. On Easter Day the symbols were removed and the cross

was adorned with flowers symbolising the glory of the risen Christ. This is the first time that Stansted Free Church has adopted this tradition.

Photos by Judy Colliver and Mike Dyer

Which Way Forward?? *Reprinted from April Imagine*

Greek has two words for time – chronos and kairos. Christians cherish kairos as the right time, the appropriate time for God's saving acts. Kairos has also been seen as a crossing 'a place where time is made right for God's work to cross our path to bring the world closer to salvation'. If we are at that time of crossing we need to give heed to it and be vigilant as to where we should be going. This is our situation: Here we are, an aging congregation, not growing and with the prospect of gradually declining in numbers over the next ten years. At the same time we are sitting on a sum of money that has resulted from generous legacies and donations from families who loved our church. Is God calling us to walk a new path and do something radically different?

Please join our discussions at a special meeting 7.45 pm on Monday 27th June

Some of the things we will be considering are:

Our money – is it to be used on **material things** in our building?

- Restoration of the organ?
- Installation of solar panels to generate electricity?
- New windows for the church?
- What else?

Or on mission?

- Supporting street pastors?
- Serving our community - old or young?
- Creating initiatives with the other churches?
- What else?

Our talents – are we equipped to serve our community? Do we really understand their needs?

Our vision – most of all – what shape do we want our church to be over the next few years?

- A holy place for prayer and worship, distinct from worldly places?
- A multi-purpose venue that serves the world by providing facilities that our community needs?

It is really crucial that we hear God's Word for us as we consider the way forward. It's not depressing but exciting. Let's grasp this opportunity, this kairos in which God beckons us forward. We hope to see you at the meeting - please book the date now! *The Editors*



Methodist Women in Britain
MWiB



CIRCUIT QUIET DAY FOR EVERYONE

Invitation to a Meal

Music, Prayers and Readings
Based on an Eddie Askew
Quiet Day

Led by Brenda and Stuart Veitch



Saturday 25th June 2011

10.00 am to 4.00 pm

Chrishall Methodist Church

Organised by Bishop's Stortford Circuit Women's Network

Can you help?

Volunteers are required to meet overseas representatives to the Methodist Conference at Stansted Airport on 28th June and take them to their accommodation in central London, picking them up on 8th July to return them to the airport. Expenses such as petrol, airport parking, trains, buses and meals will be reimbursed. Please tel Sandra Lopez 020 7467 5298 email lopezs@methodistchurch.org.uk



The next **Traidcraft** stalls will be after the service on Sundays 12th June and 3rd July If you would like any Fairtrade goods at other times, just give me a call - don't forget that I have a wide range of Traidcraft goods suitable for presents. Catalogues are still available in the church foyer.

Brenda 815819

fairtrade@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Bishop's Stortford Methodist Church

7 pm Sun 10th July

Café Worship

"Less stuff, more life?"



When is enough enough?
How can we live more simply?
Come and think about these
and many other questions
as we worship together.....

led by



Shalom

All Welcome - Meetings are 8 pm

13th June 7 Blythwood Gardens - The Moral Maze

Tape and discussion

11th July 7 Blythwood Gardens - Shalom Party

Marion Dyer

Stansted Free Church

Methodist / URC

www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

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Ministers

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Rev Allen Morton

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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