



I imagine coming from Vienna, on retirement, for the wedding of a life-time in Britain, as my Austrian friend did some years ago. She splashed out on coach trips to the Scottish Highlands, The Lake District, Welsh Border Castles, Cathedral cities, Cornwall, The Isle of Wight you name it. When she returned home and was asked by her English Class teacher to write of her holiday highlights, the title she chose was 'A Trip down the River Stort'.

I was gob-smacked at the time. What made me think of it now? When was that perfect, blue August day, chugging downstream with Ratty and Mole slipping in and out of the river banks? I went to my diary (which cannot lie!) and found, almost unbelievably, that it was two days before the worst day of our family life. How was it that she who had shared, and still shares, our sadness, could look 'over' it and write of her day of utter brightness?

Then I heard a 'thought for the day' by Rev Rob Marshall, about the disturbed and riotous progress of the Olympic Torch - let the torch light up the darkness of life - in Tibet, Zimbabwe, Dafur and your own darkness; that is what lights are for, not to stop demonstrations and protests. But remember, the Light must - can - never be extinguished (did St John say something about this?). And when there is not much to look forward to - well, there's always 'A trip down the River Stort'.

Phyllis Harrison



Care Time



We ask you to remember in your prayer those church members and friends who have been unwell recently, or who are unable to come to church as often as they would like.

Welcome

We extend a very warm welcome to our new URC minister, Rev Allen Morton, and his wife Daphne. We look forward to their ministry with us over the coming years as we continue our journey as one united church.

We also extend a very warm welcome to Iris Evans who was welcomed into membership recently. Iris was previously a member of an Anglican Church in Enfield.

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The next edition of **Imagine** will be available on Sunday 25th May. Please submit articles by Friday, 16th May. If you have email access, then we would prefer your articles to be sent 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 May

Sunday Worship at Stansted Free Church

4 th	10.30 am	Rev David Mullins & The Worship Team
	2.30 pm	Rev Murray George
		<i>followed by tea in the foyer - all welcome</i>
11 th	10.30 am	Peter Dawe
18 th	10.30 am	Rev Allen Morton - Holy Communion
25 th	10.30 am	Gerry Arnell

Other Activities

Sun 4 th	3.30 pm	Outreach Tea
Sat 10 th	4.00 pm	Induction of Rev Allen Morton Water Lane URC, B Stortford
Sun 11 th	6.30 pm	United Service for Christian Aid Week Quaker Meeting House
Mon 12 th	6.00 pm	Pilots in the Hall
	8.00 pm	Shalom in the Hall Christian Aid Fundraising Quiz
Wed 14 th	10.30 am	Christian Aid Coffee Morning
Mon 19 th	2.30 pm	Monday Club in the Hall
Tue 20 th	8.00 pm	Church Meeting in the Hall



UNITED SERVICE

6.30 pm Sun 11th May

Quaker Meeting House

COFFEE MORNING

10.30 am - noon Wed 14th May

Free Church Foyer

Fairtrade Goods on Sale

All welcome to both events

Door-to-door collectors still wanted 11th -18th May

Please contact Catherine on 813579

From the Secretary

I can now confirm that Allen Morton's induction will take place on May 10th at 4 pm at Bishops Stortford URC. Sorry it's such short notice, but you will appreciate that buying a new manse has taken time and Allen's arrival depended on a manse being available for him and Daphne to move into. As it happens, the manse won't be quite ready by May 10th but his present church, at Burnham on Crouch, have kindly offered to let them stay there until it is. So Allen will commute between Burnham and here for a few weeks. Allen's first service with us will be the communion on 18th May.

Back to the induction, everyone of course is invited. If you need transport please speak to me. For catering purposes, could you let me know by 3rd May if you will be going? We can always accommodate a few people who turn up on the day but we don't want to run out of food or cups! We have been asked to help with the refreshments so if I haven't already put your name down to make a cake, please speak to me. That doesn't let the men or anyone who says they can't make cakes, off the hook, as the Co-op sell very nice Fairtrade cakes; and frozen sausage rolls are very easy - not cakes, I know, but they will be very acceptable, so no excuses!!

This will be the last time we will see Elizabeth Caswell as our Moderator, as her term of office finishes the following week and she will be moving away to become a full time minister again.

An induction is a big occasion in the life of the URC and our church, so I do hope everyone will be able to come.

Don't forget the next church meeting will be on 20th May at 8 pm. Again everyone is welcome, and we hope people will make the effort to attend as this will be Allen's first church meeting with us.

Betty



Shalom

On 12th May in the Hall, we will be having a fundraising quiz for Christian Aid. It is a general knowledge quiz and we hope that all the churches will send a team along - please let me know if you would like to be part of our church team!!

Catherine Dean

christianaid@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Pilots

Meetings for this term We welcome anyone to come and join us.

Mondays 6 - 7.30 pm in the Hall.

12th May Australian evening - Arthur & Dave Law

2nd June News of Fairtrade - Brenda Veitch

16th June MAF Evening - Michelle King (local representative)

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

14th July Jan & Roger with guide dog Ripper

Peace Box

We have opened the Church Peace Box and have looked at its contents, both pictures and prayers, poems, etc. Thanks also for the 50p piece which has gone into Pilot funds!! The Peace Box is now going into St. John's Church and we will collect it in a few weeks

Valerie 813433

National Photograph Competition Winner



Do you remember this photograph of the Children's day in March 2005? Well this photograph, taken by Alan Wheeler, has been declared the winner of the first photograph competition arranged by Methodist Insurance. Alan's photograph was winner in the 'Church Life' category, awarding £50 for himself and £100 for the church. It was also voted overall winner of the whole competition, for which the church was awarded £500 to spend on resources. It has been decided to purchase on portable display boards for the porch and a projection screen for the church. This is a

great honour for both Alan and the church, and the photograph will be appearing on the Methodist Insurance website in due course.



Paradise for the Cat !



We have become host to two adult cats whose previous providers have gone overseas to become missionaries.

These two feline characters were their 'babies' and having the intelligence of approximately three year old human beings, cannot understand the new priorities of their parents. If you listen to what they ask for to come in or go out, to fill their faces or to be dried ... they behave just like toddlers. But the one thing they hate is change. They like life to keep the same pattern today as yesterday. You know by the time they eat and sleep they know their timetable. They miaow if anything upsets the status quo. And what is my point in telling you this (apart from "always listen to your cat!")? Well we are a bit like that aren't we? We hate change too. But we must! Just take a look at hymn 558 in Rejoice and Sing that we sang the other Sunday:

God: "Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?"

Our response: "Let me turn and follow you and never be the same?"

You see! In singing this hymn we ask to be changed. We request to be the answer to prayer. We long to let our lives be both grown in Christ and used by Him. Are we really prepared for the changes this prayer or hymn will bring? Be ready! Like my cats you may not be fed next according to your timetable!

William Frogley

Stansted Fun Run & Walk 11 am Sunday 15th June

This year's event is supporting: Hearing Help Uttlesford; Diabetes UK; and The Moreton Romanian Orphans Fund (in which Jane Perkins from Water Lane URC is involved).



You may have seen in the Link magazine that we are looking for more helpers. We would not want to encourage you to miss morning worship, but we will still need helpers from noon onwards.

If you can help, please contact me. Many thanks.

Marion Dyer

info@stansted10k.org.uk

Good Friday Project

Some members of the Stansted Pilot Group took part in the Good Friday Project in St. John's Church. Fran and Juliet Richards came on several occasions to prepare us for the day. I was in the Drama Group but other activities were taking place during the day, such as music, art and craft, etc. We rehearsed for a play in the morning and then had lunch together, continuing with our activities in the afternoon.

The play was about the crucifixion of Jesus and was made modern by using the style of the "x" factor. We called ours the "+" (cross) factor. At the end of the day parents and friends came to watch the play and look at the work that we had done in our other activities.



The Vicar was with us on the day and he asked my mum, Michelle to tell everyone about our Pilot Group. We all went home having had a great day.

Abigail King

Photo taken by Michael Howes shows Abigail reading from the pulpit

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