

# Imagine!



Imagine a day  
on the Somme  
1916

**I** imagine... Just a few chords on a piano and you know what is to follow. You have heard it so often, the voice of John Lennon inviting you to 'Imagine...' It is one of the most popular songs of the 20th century and according to the much travelled former US President, Jimmy Carter, "you hear John Lennon's song 'Imagine' used almost equally with national anthems."

But what is it that we are invited to imagine?

That 'there's no heaven', 'no countries', 'nothing to kill or die for', 'and no religion too'. You'd have thought that with lyrics like this it would never have gained such popularity. After all, Lennon himself described it as "an anti-religious, anti-nationalistic, anti-conventional, anti-capitalistic song"! Now there's a lot of people to upset there!

And yet the song transcends the negativity, speaks to a fundamental longing, and carves out a new hope. Just imagine a world in which there is 'no need for greed or hunger' but 'a brotherhood of man'. 'Imagine all the people sharing all the world.'

*'You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one.*

*I hope someday you'll join us and the world will be as one.'*

This is another way of putting what the great dreamer, Martin Luther King Jnr, said some years before, "We must learn to live together as brothers or we are going to perish together as fools."

At the heart of our Christian experience is the Christ who calls us to 'love one another', and more than that even to love our enemies; who invites us to enter this new world of the kingdom now. The loving, forgiving, welcoming, reconciling, healing, serving and sharing are Christ's gifts and call to us now. We don't need to wait a moment longer. Here and now Christ makes it possible for us to be one with God and with one another. Imagine that.





# Care Time



We remember Fran's brother Doug, living in New Zealand, recovering from a heart attack; Stuart & Brenda Veitch, and Arthur, David & Karen Law on their travels in Australia and New Zealand; for Cherry Lewis, who is still recovering from her mystery virus; and for all those unable to attend church as often as they would like, including Mary Heuch and Ivor Thomas.

We also remember our minister, David Mullins and his family, as they take a well-earned week's break from 29th October. If you need a minister during this time, please contact Rev Trevor Sands or Janet Townsend.

In this issue:	Page
Services and Events	3
URC Synod	4 - 5
Imagine...	5
Pilots	6 - 7
From the Secretary	8
Recent Events	9
Operation Christmas Child	10 - 11
Monday Club	11
Contacts	Back cover

The next edition of **Imagine** will be available on Sunday 25th November. Please submit articles by Friday 16th November. If you have email access, then we would prefer your articles to be sent to: [news@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto: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](http://www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)**

# What's on in November

## Sunday Worship at Stansted Free Church

4th	10.30 am	All Age Worship - 'Play your Part'
	2.30 pm	Rev David Mullins
11th	10.50 am	United Remembrance Day Service at St John's Rev David Mullins
18th	10.30 am	Rev Janet Tollington - Holy Communion
25th	10.30 am	Gordon Doyle

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

## Other Activities

Sun 4th	3.30 pm	Outreach tea in the Foyer
Mon 5th	8.00 pm	Shalom 7 Blythwood Gardens Video & discussion - War Graves Commission
Wed 7th	7.30 pm	Methodist Circuit Review presentation in the church
Mon 12th	6.00 pm	Pilots in the Hall
Tue 13th	7.00 pm	Shoe Box Packing in the Hall
Mon 19th	2.30 pm	Monday Club in the Hall
	7.30 pm	Circuit review presentation at Bishop's Stortford Methodist Church
Mon 26th	6.00 pm	Pilots in the Hall

### Christmas Services

We are planning a 'do it yourself' **Carol Service** at 10.30 am on Sunday 23rd December, and we invite all members of the congregation to contribute. If you would like to take part, or have a favourite Christmas reading, piece of music or carol, please let Janet, Marion or Betty know by the end of November.

Our **Christmas Day** family service at 10.30 am will be led by Rev Stuart Veitch.

## URC Synod 2007 - Cambridge

On Saturday 13th October we attended the URC Eastern Synod in Cambridge. The event was held in St Columbus Church and began with worship. There was a short talk given by the Rev Mary Irish on 'Health and Healing' and another by the Rev Dr Susan Durber on 'Vision 4 Life'.



Rev Ken Forbes who is the global partnership co-ordinator presented two visitors from Zimbabwe, both of whom spoke of the many problems facing the people of that country - spiritually, physically and financially. Of the original group of seven

ministers and members of the UPCSA Zimbabwe Synod, only the two visitors already mentioned were eventually allowed visas to visit the UK, and then only for 10 days. Their interaction with us was truly inspiring, and the whole congregation recognised that although we in this country have more than enough in many aspects of our lives, and that our visitors and their fellow citizens are being reduced to an existence of extreme hardship, the Zimbabwe Synod and its congregation had much to offer us in their faith and courage shown in very difficult times. Our heartfelt prayers for their safety and continued work in the name of Jesus Christ must be a priority.

The afternoon session continued with a welcome to new ministers to the Synod including our own Methodist minister, the Rev David Mullins. There was also time given to the business side of Synod including group structures, resolutions to Synod and updates on ministry fund proposals. All these important issues were brought to our attention, but plans for the preparation for a new ministry and mission fund contribution system were taking longer than expected and were not ready finally for this Synod.

One correction was made in the March letter sent to the churches concerning the Ministry and Mission Fund namely 'contributions from any individual church will not change by more than a moderate percentage' - should have read 'will not change in **any one year** by more than a moderate percentage'.

Other matters concerned the closure of two churches in the Synod, Claydon Old Chapel Mission Project and Gorlston URC. Thanks were given to God for the past work of these two churches.



It was good to see some familiar faces including that of Sylvia Paine, one of our youth officers from the Pilot Desk in London. Sylvia was also at our MAF evening and has been spreading around the 'good news' of the Stansted Free Church Pilot group. Henry Playle, our

Youth Development Officer was also present and our Pilots will be seeing more of Henry in the near future. Both Peter and I enjoyed the hospitality shown at St Columbus and look forward to the next Synod in March 2008, where many important issues will hopefully be resolved. The whole event finished with closing worship and communion.

*Valerie and Peter Trundle*

### ***Imagine ...***

... if all the able-bodied members of our church attended the AGM on 9th October. Imagine... that you were unable / unwilling to come, and could have responded to the 'special letter' given to all church members a week or so before the meeting...

The matter might have been more widely explored, and the decision taken possibly different – or not!

Did you absorb your special letter? Do you know the outcome?

Do you care?

*Phyllis Harrison*

# Pilots - an evening with Mission Aviation Fellowship

Imagine living in a remote part of the world and being in desperate need of medical aid, hope for recovery and a better future.

MAF (Mission Aviation Fellowship) is a Christian organisation that provides this hope, by flying their light aircraft to these otherwise inaccessible places. They give their expertise in providing the means to get medical care and missionaries to some of the world's most needy people, and sharing the message of the word of God with everyone they meet.



On 8th October, the Pilot group was fortunate enough to be visited by Mr Kevin Crook and Capt. Bryan Pill from MAF. We learnt all about their life-changing work within these communities, and saw a presentation of their work in action.



All aboard! A typical flight crew - doctors, nurses, construction workers, bible translators, a grandmother, missionaries etc etc

We are collecting used postcards for MAF. Please pass to Valerie or Peter.



There was the chance for the young people to have a try at a flight simulator landing, which was judged by Capt. Pill. Other flight related activities were enjoyed by the children, which were linked to the parable of the Good Samaritan.

We were pleased to be supported by over 40 people including 20 children, some parents, friends from the church and friends from the Christian School Takeley. We will be keeping in close contact with MAF as a group and finding out more about what they are doing within the world and how the word of God is reaching people and giving them hope.

Our thanks go to all who supported the evening in any way, and we look forward to welcoming Kevin and his team again sometime in the future.

Michelle King



## Future Dates:

Mondays 6 pm - 7.30 pm

12th & 26th November

10th December

Our theme for all of these evenings will be *Children Building Peace*. Henry Playle and Victoria Paulding will be with us on November 12th and 26th. We hope to have a visit from our local P.C.S.O. at a date to be announced. Our *Peace Box* is now with the children of St. Mary's School. We will be collecting their thoughts on peace later in the term.

Valerie Trundle



## From the Secretary

Another month had passed, where had the year gone? Harvest Festival was a lovely occasion. The morning service was led by our old friends Pamela and Martin Cressey; lots of breakfast goodies for Whitechapel Mission were collected and then we sat down to a harvest lunch. As people were so generous and paid more for their lunch than was requested, the 'profit' will be going to the Shoebox appeal.

Which brings me on to the Shoebox evening on November 13th (see page 10). If you haven't been before it's an experience you shouldn't miss. People from Stansted and beyond turn up with all manner of things - toys, sweets, gloves, hats, scarves etc. These are all laid out on tables round the hall, each table with a different item. First the 'Shoebox coverers' - a very important job for which they have served a long apprenticeship. You can't just cover a box in any old way - there is a method that ensures the box is tidily covered and which doesn't waste paper (got to be green you know)! Once the boxes are all covered, the packers take a box, decide whether it's for a boy or girl and which age group, then go round and fill it with goodies (if possible something from each table), put an elastic band round it, fix the appropriate sticker and add it to the growing pile of finished boxes. There were well over 100 boxes last year so there will be a record to beat. Do come along, there's coffee and biscuits to keep us going.

On 7th November the representatives of the Church Oversight Group will be presenting our Circuit Review Report to the District Review Team. On the 19th we'll be giving a shortened version to the rest of the circuit and hearing the same from the other churches. I am reliably informed that this is not an annual process, so at the end of it we can breathe a sigh of relief and relax for a while.

We still have a vacancy for a deacon. At the AGM it was agreed to hold this over until the December Church Meeting, so any nominations, in writing, to me by the end of November, please. Remember you need to get the consent of the person being nominated, and you also need a seconder. If anyone would like to know more about the role of deacon before being nominated please speak to David or me.

*Betty*

## Recent Church Events



Harvest Festival goods  
for the  
Whitechapel Mission

Harvest Lunch - thank  
you for feeding us so  
well Betty!



### All Age Worship 7th October

*What do you think the kingdom of heaven is like?*

Peace

A wave

Fairness and justice for all

Where people are at peace with each other

Love, peace and beauty that passes all present understanding

Equality, fairness, sharing and love.



Christmas is  
a time of giving



## Operation Christmas Child

Everyone is invited to the Free Church hall on November 13th from 7pm, for coffee and to help pack shoe boxes.

In 1990, when Operation Christmas Child began, 3000 boxes were sent. In 2006 a record 1.24 million left the UK bound for Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia. Worldwide over 7.5 million were distributed to children from nearly 100 nations speaking 70 languages. The gifts are given to children regardless of nationality, political background or religious beliefs and requiring nothing from them, their families or their communities in return.

For some children it is the first Christmas present they have ever received and it can also mean that children like 6 year old Mehi a gypsy from Northern Romania can go to school because they have their own pens, pencils and notepads; or Dvovar who was rescued from the streets after being badly treated by his father, and was living in a children's shelter, who had cried because he did not have a toothbrush like the other children, but when he opened his box and found a pack of 2 he cried again, but this time tears of joy.

Not only the things in the boxes give the children pleasure but the boxes themselves mean a lot as they are somewhere to keep their treasured possessions; they are unpacked and packed and the elastic bands put on and taken off many times. This year the boxes from here are going to Belarus, which Sue Bree the local organiser visited in August, so knows first hand the problems there.

Please start collecting items for the shoe boxes but don't forget NO chocolate, crisps, biscuits, liquids, glass or books with a lot of words. For leaflets and more details ring me or visit [www.samaritanspurse.uk.com](http://www.samaritanspurse.uk.com) where you can also find a pattern for a hand puppet which can be used as a mitten or a 'friend'.

Completed boxes, items to be included and empty shoe boxes [please not boot boxes] can be left at 58 Chapel Hill at any time. Donations of money are also very gratefully received as this goes towards transportation costs.

And finally come along on November 13 and join in the fun and help to put a smile on a child's face this Christmas.

*Janet Townsend*

## Monday Club

What a pleasant afternoon we spent with Valerie and Peter Trundle (who needed no introduction), singing old songs that brought back many memories and some we could join in with; and between songs Valerie read poems by Pam Ayres. Thank you Valerie and Peter. Now we are looking forward to our next meeting to end the year with Peter and Queenie Brown. This is on 19th November at 2.30 pm. All are most welcome to come along.

Lord open our eyes  
that we may see you in our brothers and sisters

Lord open our ears  
that we may hear the cries from the hungry,  
the frightened and oppressed

Lord open our hands  
that we may reach out to all who are in need

Lord open our hearts  
that we may love each other as you love us

*from the Women of Canada*

*Phyllis Little*

**Stansted Free Church**  
**Methodist / URC**  
[www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](http://www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)

## **Contacts**

### **Minister**

Rev David Mullins

Email: [minister@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:minister@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)

URC Interim Moderator Rev Janet Tollington

### **Church Secretary**

Betty Francis

Email: [info@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:info@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)

### **Lettings & Church Notices**

Janet Townsend

Email: [lettings@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:lettings@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)

### **Newsletter Editors**

Alan Wheeler Mike & Marion Dyer

Email: [news@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:news@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)

### **Pilots**

Valerie Trundle

Email: [pilots@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:pilots@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)

## **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.