



Imagine that you are a Bangladeshi. You have no electricity in your home. You walk everywhere, though if you have to travel a long distance and you can afford it, you may take a bus. The idea of going in an aeroplane is as remote as going to the moon. You grow your own food or buy it at the local market. None of it is shrink-wrapped.

So your carbon footprint is very tiny. But, because of global warming, the floods are getting worse every year. People are already leaving the coastal areas and migrating to the cities to live in slums.

Imagine you are Chinese. You aspire to owning a car, which is much more comfortable than riding a bike and wearing a mask so you don't breathe in the polluted air. You know that nearly everybody in the western world has a car, and some households even have two. And if you get that promotion at work you may be able to afford to visit your sister 500 miles away, where they've just built a new airport. So your carbon footprint is growing as your wealth increases.

Imagine you are a member of Stansted Free Church. Your carbon footprint is about average for this country, but more than twelve times bigger than the Bangladeshi's and five times bigger than your Chinese cousin's. You know about climate change and your contribution to it. Because you are a Christian, you have a strong sense of your responsibility to save the planet. You have the knowledge and the ability to cut your personal carbon emissions. You can lead by example. I can help you calculate your carbon footprint and suggest ways to reduce it (and your carbon emissions). You can act - now!

Catherine Dean

Shelter from the storm

Prayer pointers



Pray for those living under repressive regimes, such as in Burma and Korea; that God will bring them comfort and strength. For those who have lost crops or animals due to floods and disease..

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The next edition of **Imagine** will be available on Sunday 28th October. Please submit articles by Friday 19th October. 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 October

Sunday Worship at Stansted Free Church

7th	10.30 am	All Age Worship
	2.30 pm	Rev Murray George
14th	10.30 am	Andrew Brown
21st	10.30 am	Rev David Mullins - Holy Communion
28th	10.30 am	Faith Paulding

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

Mon 1st	8.00 pm	Shalom 7 Blythwood Gdns Catherine Dean - Chairman's Challenge
Sun 7th	3.30 pm	Outreach tea in the Foyer
Mon 8th	6.00 pm	Pilots Open Meeting in the Hall with Mission Aviation Fellowship
Tue 9th	8.00 pm	Annual Church Meeting in the Hall
Mon 15th	2.30 pm	Monday Club in the Hall
	8.00 pm	Shalom in the Hall Jane Perkins - Romanian Orphans Appeal
Tue 23rd	7.30 pm	Churches Together AGM in the Hall
Mon 29th	6.00 pm	Pilots in the Hall

Other Dates for your Diary

Methodist District Network Events

Thursday 11th October at Dunstable, "Slavery Then and Now"
Saturday 3rd November at Bedford a Craft Day at Priory Methodist Church, from 10am-4.15pm. £4.00 per session. Details from Catherine Fox on 833148.

One World Week Service

6.30 pm Sunday 21st October Saffron Walden Methodist Church led by Rev Murray George

Pilots

A SPECIAL *PILOT* EVENING

On Monday 8th October Pilots are holding a special evening led by Mission Aviation Fellowship. The evening will take the form of a presentation about the work of MAF, describing how light aircraft are flown into inaccessible parts of the world, taking medical supplies and providing any other support that may be needed in an emergency. Competitions will be provided for the children including the use of a flight simulator.

Church members and friends are asked to support this event and will receive a warm welcome. For catering reasons we need to know numbers on Sunday 30th September.

MAF is a Christian organisation that has been speeding the spread of the Good News of the Lord Jesus Christ by word and deed in places of deepest human need since 1946.

Venue Free Church Hall Time 6 - 7.30 pm Date Oct. 8th

Please note that there will be no meeting during half term week, so the next meeting after this one will be at 6 pm on Monday 29th October.

CONGRATULATIONS ...

... to two of our Pilots who are no longer able to attend our meetings due to living in Saffron Walden.

Christine McGregor has taken and passed two GCSE exams a year early: Art A* and Geography B

Amy McGregor is now performing in local school productions, using her talents of singing, dancing and drama.

We are looking forward to a visit from them at our special Pilot evening.

Valerie Trundle 813433

From the Minister

I am delighted to be joining with you at Stansted Free Church in these early years of your journey together as a United Reformed and Methodist community. I've got much to learn. Although I have always valued ecumenical life, this will be the first time that I have been involved in an ecumenical church. So please bear with me!

As a Methodist minister, however, my links with the United Reformed Church go back a long way. In fact, my journey into the Methodist ministry owes a good deal to my involvement with a youth group that I was part of in Cardiff that drew together young people from several URC and Methodist churches. We led services together in both Methodist and URC churches as well as shared in some larger ecumenical events.



My training for the ministry was in Cambridge at Wesley House where I was so pleased to be part of the newly emerging Federation of Theological Colleges which included the URC Westminster College. I have happy memories of lectures, meals, and worship at the College, and I was glad to discover that your Interim Moderator, Janet Tollington is based there.

Over the years I have been blessed with very good colleagues and friends in the URC and in Muswell Hill, from where we have just moved; our churches shared together in worship on several occasions. So although I am new to a united church, I am not really a stranger to the URC tradition.

I have been glad to meet some of you already, and I very much look forward to getting to know you all better and to working with you. I also look forward to sharing in ministry with the new URC minister when she or he is appointed in due course.

Thank you for your welcome.

David

Churches Together in Stansted

AGM Tuesday 23rd October in the Stansted Free Church Hall.

7pm Tea & Coffee

7.30pm Rosina Down (Saffron Walden Methodist Church)
 'Environmental Sustainability and the Churches'

8.15 pm Business Meeting.

All very welcome. Please come along.

Birmingham Visit

On Sunday, 21st October we will be visiting our friends at the Church of Cherubim & Seraphim in Birmingham, leaving Crafton Green 11 am and returning to Stansted approx 9pm.

If you are interested in going please telephone me.

David Morson, Chair Tel 850209

Doggit! another parable on prayer!

When a family bereavement hits us we are not always able to go to the funeral as we would like. Gary's relationship with his father was so strained that when his grandad died he didn't feel it would be right to go to the funeral. At the time of the funeral he was busy in the office, but he wanted to spend a few moments thinking about his grandad. Southwark Cathedral was empty and he sat down in a pew and lost himself in his reflections. Suddenly he thought "I'll light a candle!" He went to light one but saw the sign 'Light a candle 10p!' His pockets were empty but he thought he would light one anyway. The candle looked so nice that he lit another one. Within a few minutes he had three candles burning and he returned to his pew. Immediately he became aware that a dog was beside him. A dog in a cathedral? Then he looked up and saw a large policeman. "Oh no. I did mean to pay for the candles. Honestly!" groaned Gary. "No sir it's not that I have to clear the cathedral and check for explosives ... Prince Charles is coming." Gary left the church smiling "Naughty old grandad playing tricks on him again!!"

Alan Wheeler

From the Secretary

The Church Meeting on Tuesday 9th October is the AGM and therefore an important one - this is not to say that other Church Meetings are not important. I must confess I had forgotten and therefore did not mention it on the agenda. Put this down to pressure of work, a senior moment or just incompetence! The AGM will be your opportunity to elect a new secretary - one who has got his or her brain in gear.

We shall also be electing people to fill all the other positions in the church, so if you feel a burning desire to put your name forward please speak to me. Some time ago we did ask for nominations for a new deacon but so far there have been no takers. It's not too late, just speak to me if you have any suggestions, but don't forget you must obtain the agreement of the person you wish to nominate. At this meeting we have to make several very important decisions so please do your best to be there. Everyone is welcome to attend and join in the discussions but only members may vote.

Recently all members were given the chance to vote on their preferred day for Church Meetings. Tuesday was the day that most people were available. It is hoped that we can earmark a particular Tuesday on alternate months so you always know when Church Meeting will be.

Betty



On 1st October, at 7 Blythwood Gardens, Catherine Dean will be telling us about her awareness raising and fundraising for environmental causes during her year as Chair of Uttlesford District Council.

The following meeting will be a talk about the Moreton Romanian Orphans Fund, given by Jane Perkins from Bishop's Stortford URC. This will be on October 15th and will be in the Church Hall.

All meetings start at 8 pm, and are open to all. Please join us - you will be warmly welcomed!

Marion Dyer

Christmas is a time of giving



Operation Christmas Child

Summer is over, the children are back at school and our thoughts begin to turn to Christmas and shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child.

Christmas 2006 saw a record number of completed boxes leave the United Kingdom, 1.24 million in fact bound for destinations across Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia. Worldwide more than 7.5 million were distributed to nearly 100 nations to children who speak more than 70 languages. The gifts are given regardless of nationality, political background or religious beliefs to children, requiring nothing from them, their families or their communities in return.

If you would like to help to put a smile on these children's faces come to the **Pack A Box** evening on November 13th in Stansted Free Church hall from 7pm - book the date in your diary and start collecting items for the boxes now. If you can't come down on that date, then you can leave your completed box in my porch.

Please don't forget: NO chocolate, crisps, biscuits, liquids, glass or books with a lot of words.

For more details ring me or visit the Samaritan's Purse website at www.samaritanspurse.uk.com.

Empty shoe boxes are also needed [please not boot boxes] and these can be left at 58 Chapel Hill at any time.

Janet Townsend 812593

Ivor - 95 and still going strong!

It was lovely to have Ivor Thomas with us a few weeks ago, just after his 95th birthday (even though he preferred to call himself 59!). During the service he read the following poem to us:

I'M STILL GOING STRONG

Today, today I am ninety-five,
Thanks to you dear Lord, I've stayed alive.
I know that now I need a stick,
But I'll stick around 'till ninety-six.

And whilst I may be close to heaven,
You'll see me here at ninety-seven.
Slowing down preparing to meet my fate,
But I'll be here come ninety-eight.

I have seen so many incredible things,
And had a wonderful time,
Yet I'll still be on the lookout
When I reach ninety-nine.

For my hundred, that's a special day,
I'll throw this ruddy stick away.
The Queen will send my telegram,
A hundred years since I began.

And though I know just how time races,
I think I might kick o'er the traces.
So now that's all, I've had my say,
You can raise your glass to my Birthday.

E. G. Vanlint



Thank you Ivor, for entertaining us so well, and we wish you many more happy years to come.

A Holiday Find

Whilst on a recent holiday in the Lake District we found the following poem in a church in the village of Coniston. On entering the building we were delighted to see the vestry set out for light lunches, tea and cakes.

The folk inside were friendly and interested in our church at Stansted, especially our partnership together, with both Methodist and URC forming the Stansted Free Church.

It was good to spend some time in the company of like-minded people and to share in their endeavours to work with other denominations. They were really serving the community, in a positive way - both residents and holiday makers such as ourselves.

OPEN YOUR HEART

He is not found in any church denomination or creed, He is found in the hearts of those who believe.

If you have not invited Jesus to live in your heart, you are missing out on all that is really important in this life.

Ask someone you know who has asked Jesus to live in their heart, to tell you about him, learn of him, then make your choice.

If you choose wisely, we will meet someday and share in the gift and the joy that can only come from allowing Jesus to live in your heart.

Valerie and Peter

Monday Club

"How I like to be looked after" by the Cat!

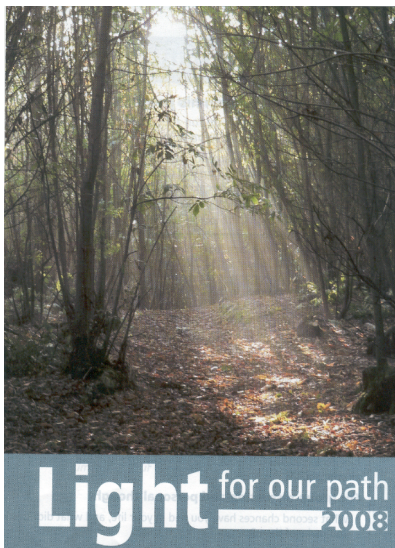
Sometimes life's little hazards brings us a nice surprise! A last minute change of programme meant that our September Monday Club session had to be improvised unexpectedly. Members contributed items. Firstly Ann opened the meeting with prayer. Then we all roared with laughter when Doris read out a list of instructions, supposedly written by two of her neighbour's cats as to how they were to be looked after when their master and mistress were on holiday. Each cat set out its likes and dislikes - all very hilarious! We followed this with a quiz about anagrams. Somehow the programme came together as a very enjoyable afternoon, concluding with a cup of tea. As for the next two sessions we have had a slight change of plan:

15 October 2.30 pm Valerie and Peter

19 November 2.30 pm Peter and Queenie Brown

As usual you are all very welcome.

Phyllis Little



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Valerie Trundle

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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 81 3433