

Imagine!



Feb
2017

I imagine a luxury cruise liner at anchor in the glistening blue waters of a Caribbean bay or a pleasure boat safely moored in a sheltered Mediterranean harbour. Now imagine a cargo ship rocked by violent storms or a dinghy becalmed in mid-ocean. I suspect most of us would prefer to be in safe harbour. But imagine if the cruise liner never sailed beyond its home shores or cargo ships never crossed oceans. Where would the sense of discovery be? How would people trade their goods? How would the cruise ship reach its balmy, tropical paradise if it did not take the risk of venturing beyond the protective walls of Ipswich docks and crossing the Atlantic?

A boat is designed to do more than float; it has sails or oars or engines to power it along and navigational tools to set and follow a course. Only vessels which have served their purpose can usefully remain permanently at anchor or in dry dock, like the historic warships Paul and I visited at Chatham dockyard last year, or HMS Belfast moored as a museum ship on the River Thames.

Now imagine you are a little boat tied with a rope through a ring to the harbour wall. You can remain safe in your harbour, or you can do what a boat is meant to do and set sail, trusting in God to guide you safely through choppy waters, stormy seas, calm waters and maybe the doldrums as you wait for a fresh blowing of the Holy Spirit. Are you ready to cast off and venture into deeper waters with God this year, to risk new forms of service and discover new horizons? Imagine what adventures you might have.

In Christian love

Caroline



Care Time



We pray for the events that are happening in Stansted during February, particularly those raising funds for Christian Aid. We remember Arthur as he travels to Australia to visit his daughter; all those who are unwell or awaiting operations; the Syrian Family who are still finding it difficult to settle in Stansted; and those who come to The Place on the Hill and Messy Church.

We are asked to remember Bishop's Stortford YMCA's social events that bring together their residents so that they can develop a true sense of community and belonging.

You are invited to use the prayer request slips which are available in the foyer

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The next edition of ***Imagine*** will be available on 26th February. Please submit articles by Friday 17th February to: news@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk. Alternatively, please pass to one of the editors, or send to: 23A Bentfield Road, Stansted CM24 8HP.

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 FEBRUARY

Worship at Stansted Free Church

- 5th 10.30 am The Worship Team - New Directions
12th 10.30 am Rev'd David Mullins
19th 10.30 am Janet Bottoms
26th 10.30 am Rev'd Roy Fowler - Communion

Other Activities

- Sat 11th 2.30 pm Mable Dodds at Quaker Meeting House (p 7)
Wed 8th 7.30 pm Discussion Group at Abbey Lane URC (p 4)
Mon 13th 8.00 pm Shalom Bible Study at 7 Blythwood Gardens
Sun 19th 11.30 am Fairtrade goods on sale after the service
Mon 20th 8.00 pm Circuit Finance Meeting in the Hall
Sat 25th 12 pm Christian Aid Lunch
Tue 28th 7.15 pm Pancakes and Prayer in the Foyer and Church (p 5)



Shalom

8 pm Monday 13th Feb
at 7 Blythwood Gardens

Stuart Veitch will be leading a Bible study on the parable of the blind beggar and Zacchaeus. This promises to be a very interesting evening. All are welcome - please join us.

Marion



*An Invitation to Lunch from
Christian Aid*

Come anytime between noon and 2 pm

Saturday 25th February

Free Church Hall

*Enjoy a warming bowl of tasty soup and a
chunk of crusty bread for only £5*

Everyone Welcome - All Proceeds to Christian Aid

Let's have a Conversation

*What exactly is
The U.R.C.?*

What have we got to shout about?

Isn't it rude to shout?

Where have we been going for 45 years?

What does 'Ecumenical' mean now?

Discussion Group

Join Us...

7.30 pm Wednesday 8th February
Abbey Lane Vestry

*Abbey Lane & Newport United Reformed Church
incorporating Saffron Walden Methodist Church*

For more information contact Stephen
or see www.saffronwaldenurc.org.uk



Pancakes and Prayer

Shrove Tuesday

28th February

Stansted Free Church



Please come and join people from the other
WEBS churches
for a pre-Lent feast of pancakes
followed by a short time of prayer

**Pancakes and coffee will be served
between 7.15 and 8.15 p m**

Come any time

Prayers will start at 8.15 pm

Everyone Welcome

*Please note the event will take place in the
Church not the Hall*

For catering purposes it would be helpful
(but not essential) if you can let us know you
are coming

Please call Betty or email:
betty@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER



International and Interdenominational



**2 pm Friday 3rd March
Stansted Quaker Meeting House**

Am I being Unfair to You?

Prepared by the women of The Philippines

On Friday 3rd March, over 5,000 services will be held in the British Isles on the theme of 'Am I Being Unfair to You?' The Christian women of the Philippines wrote the service and it has been translated into 1,000 different languages and dialects. The same service will be used throughout the world, starting at sunrise over the island of Samoa and continuing until sunset off the coast of American Samoa.

In 2013, Typhoon Haiyan - named locally as *Yolanda* - struck the Philippine islands in the Pacific Ocean. This is mentioned in the service but you will also hear the stories of a girl, a mother and an older woman, recounting their situations and their hopes and fears.

The service focusses on the Bible story of the workers in the vineyard: Matthew 20 v 1-16. There is a reflection on the artwork designed by Rowena 'Apol' Laxamana-Sta.Rosa. It is very thought provoking and illustrates contrasting scenes.

Why not find out more about the theme, the Philippines and the service? The Day of Prayer is not just for women - everyone is welcome, men and women. The service will be followed by refreshments. There will also be a Traidcraft Stall.

Brenda



An Afternoon with Mabel Fawcett Dodds
www.notgoingquietly.co.uk

2.30 pm Sat 11th February
Stansted Friends Meeting House

An Afternoon of AmDram Fun (more like an extended charade really!)
based on *The Secret Recorded Diaries of Mabel Fawcett Dodds*

Free - All Welcome

Retiring collection for Christian Aid

For more information call Sue

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT



Fairtrade COFFEE / tea / biscuits
PLUS

Sale OF FAIRTRADE GOODS

10 am - noon Thur 9th Mar in the Church & Foyer

The stalls will also be available on Fri 10th Mar

at The Place on the Hill

All are warmly invited~ come and browse!

Contact Brenda for more information



facebook The Place on the Hill
twitter @placeonthehill

Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays

9.30 am - 12.30 pm

Free Church, Chapel Hill

Everyone Welcome ~ No Charge

Chill out and enjoy free refreshments, good company, free WiFi and computers, with a choice of a the quieter foyer with comfy chairs or the church with lots of room for the kids to play

www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk/theplace

Stansted Free Church (Methodist / URC)

www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Part of the WEBS (West Essex & Bishop's Stortford) URC Pastorate
and the Bishop's Stortford Methodist Circuit

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Brenda Veitch

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Sunday Service

10.30 am Morning Worship.

1st Sunday of each month - New Directions (Informal)

The Place on the Hill Drop-In (Everyone Welcome)

Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9.30 am - 12.30 pm

Tel Marion & Mike, Catherine & Alan or Fran

Email: theplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk