

Imagine!



Dec
2019

Imagine a king was coming to stay. You'd be cleaning the house from top to bottom, ordering in fresh flowers, buying new bed linen and scouring your cookery books for the best royal feast recipes. There would be a great air of anticipation and excitement. But despite many prophecies and signs in the heavens, the arrival of the *King of the Earth* was unexpected and the world was not ready to welcome him.

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing.*

Often sung as a Christmas carol to the tune *Nativity*, Isaac Watts' hymn is more properly an Advent hymn, celebrating the kingship of God and the truth that Christ is come. Our Christmas preparations are a joyful celebration of that eternal truth. What will we do this Advent to prepare room for the coming of Christ in our hearts and lives?

Around the world some churches will be following a Mexican tradition, as members of the congregation make their homes into a *Posada* or Inn, giving a home to the nativity figures of Mary and Joseph for a night. This symbolises making room for Jesus in our lives, homes and communities.

May God bless you and your loved ones this Christmas and may the lonely and homeless find room in our hearts, homes and communities.

Joy to you, and peace. In Christian love, *Caroline*



Care Time



We pray for those who are or have been unwell, going through stressful times, or in pain, especially Valerie, Sue, Martin, Roy, Caroline and Paul; and for those who are mourning loved ones. We remember Liliane and Noel, and others who are no longer able to come to church, and those who are separated from loved ones at Christmas, especially the Syrian refugee families in Stansted.



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Christmas Special Events **Mon 9th, Wed 11th and Fri 13th Dec** **10 am - 11.30 am**

Come and join the fun making Christingles followed by a visit from Father Christmas

There will also be a video of the Christmas Story which is suitable for all ages

All Welcome - come on any or all of the days, even if you do not normally attend The Place

The Place is open **throughout December** Mon, Wed & Fri 9.30 am - 12.30 pm
EXCEPT Wednesday 25th December

Contact Marion & Mike email: theplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk



CHRISTMAS ON THE GREEN **Saturday 21st December 4.00 pm at Mountfitchet Green** *(the enclosed grass area bordered by Mountfitchet Road, Stoneyfield Drive and Mount Drive)*

As darkness falls we tell the Christmas story, sing Christmas songs and carols, and enjoy seasonal refreshments for all the family. Join in the fun by coming dressed as a Christmas character and bring a lantern or torch. Please note this is a standing event, so if you need to sit, please bring a seat with you.

Contact Dave Morson for further information.

There is no Churches Together Celebration of Christmas event this year

Please email articles for **Imagine** to: news@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

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 DECEMBER

Worship at Stansted Free Church

1st 10.30 am The Worship Team - New Directions
8th 10.30 am Rev'd Roy Fowler - Communion
15th 10.30 am Rev'd Charles Martin - Gift Service (see below)
22nd 10.30 am Carol Service
25th 10.30 am Rev'd Roy Fowler - Christmas Day
29th 10.30 am Rev'd Jan Atkins-Snow

Other Activities

Sun 1st 3.30 pm Messy Church at St Mary's School
Wed 4th 8.00 pm LPWT Meeting in the Hall
Mon 9th/Wed 11th/Fri 13th 10.00 am The Place Christmas Special Events
Sun 15th 11.30 am Fairtrade Goods on sale after the service
Sat 21st 4.00 pm Churches Together Christmas on The Green
Sun 22nd 3.00 pm Village Carol Singing at Mountfitchet House

Gift Service 15th December

We will be collecting items for the Bishop's Stortford Night Shelter which provides accommodation, food, activities and advice to homeless people during the winter months. Items needed are:

Tea, coffee, biscuits, socks, underwear and tinned whole tomatoes.

If you are not able to be at the service, donations may be left in the vestry, but please label for the Night Shelter. Thank you.

Carol Service 22nd December

Betty is arranging our carol service and would like suggestions of carols and readings to be included - please let her know by 7th December.



VILLAGE CAROL SINGING

Sunday 22nd December 3.00 pm

Mountfitchet House



We are continuing our tradition of visiting one of the three care homes in Stansted in rotation. This year we shall meet at Mountfitchet House Care Home in Coltsfield to entertain the residents for about 45 minutes. We welcome more singers - there is no rehearsing, just turn up. Please come and join us. We will not be singing round the streets or collecting money this year.

Mike Dyer

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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Sunday Service

10.30 am Morning Worship.
Some months we hold *New Directions* which is an informal service

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

Monday, Wednesday and Friday (not Bank Holidays)

9.30 am - 12.30 pm

Tel Marion & Mike , Catherine or Fran

Email: theplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

