



**I**magine ... Kestrel hovering, motionless, on the up-current, peering fixedly at tiny movement on the dusty ground below...viper coiled in the cool shading of overhanging rock...leopard, stretched out, panting in the heat, eyes half closed against the glare, ignoring the solitary Ibex loitering at the nearby watering hole. Mercifully shadowed by a twisted, heat blasted tree, sits a man in concentrated thought, eyes seeing past the immediate. Outwardly still, but he knows himself driven to this looked-for solitude, before commencing his struggle - not with fellow humans as much as against the baleful forces always beneath the surface-peace won and kept by violence, a peace benefiting only the powerful and strong.

An ancient picture fills his thoughts: wolf and lamb lying down together, a lion eating grass like the ox, the child playing, unharmed, near the cobra, long awaited Eden come at last, where all manner of things shall be well! Having heard that unearthly Voice, felt Spirit's wind-rush propelling him into his innermost wilderness, he must firstly wrestle down his own demons and desires. There he must learn to finely use the God-given freedom of being the Son of God, benchmark for all humanity.

Mark imagines the scene: *'At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert, and he was in the desert for forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and the angels attended him'.*

God, whose own dear Son was among the wild animals in the desert, fill our minds this Lent with the vision of the world as you will it to become, where making and preparing for war will be abolished for ever, so that all humanity will live together in just peace, in harmony with all your other creatures.

Allen Morton

## Don't put off what God wants you to do!

How often we put off things until tomorrow - even responding to Christ's special mission for us. Maybe we should regain a sense of urgency. I was struck by a little piece of wisdom in sailor Adrian Flanagan's book: *Over the Top*. He writes, "Nothing in life is certain, to dally is to waste, to prevaricate is to squander, to dream but not to act leads only to regret". Apply Adrian's words to your Christian life; do not put off your desire to walk in Christ's chosen path for you. Act now; commit yourself to the only certainty we know. To put it off until tomorrow is foolish.

William Frogley

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The next edition of **Imagine** will be available on Sunday 22nd February. Please submit articles by Friday 13th February 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 February

## Sunday Worship at Stansted Free Church

1<sup>st</sup> 10.30 am Nigel Courtman & The Worship Team  
8<sup>th</sup> 10.30 am Rev'd David Mullins  
15<sup>th</sup> 10.30 am Rev'd Allen Morton  
Holy Communion  
22<sup>nd</sup> 10.30 am Andrew Brown

**Morning worship is followed by coffee. All are welcome.**

## Other Activities

Mon 2<sup>nd</sup> 8.00 pm Shalom at 7 Blythwood Gardens  
Edna Goreing: Prayers, Music & Readings  
Sun 8<sup>th</sup> 11.30 am Fairtrade goods on sale after service  
Mon 9<sup>th</sup> 6.00 pm Pilots in the Hall  
Sat 14<sup>th</sup> 7.30 pm Valentine Social at Water Lane URC  
Mon 16<sup>th</sup> 8.00 pm Shalom at 7 Blythwood Gardens  
Catherine Dean: Forgiveness  
Mon 23<sup>rd</sup> 6.00 pm Pilots in the Hall

## Advance Notices

Wed 4<sup>th</sup> March 10 am - noon Coffee Morning & Fairtrade Sale  
Tue 10<sup>th</sup> March 8.00 pm Church Meeting in the Hall

*Water Lane URC Bishop's Stortford warmly invite you to a*

## ***Valentine Social Evening***



*7.30 pm Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> February*



*Bring and Share supper*

***Raffle***

***Lighthearted Quiz***

***Fun***

*For more details contact Maggie Groves on 657243*

## Prayer for Change

Today as I write this article I reflect on a TV programme I've just watched, together with millions around the world. The inauguration of President Obama. He got there on a ticket of change, and in his inaugural speech he painted a picture that needed great change, from economics that reward the greedy, from politics that live on dividing people, from policy initiatives that depend on force, and on treatment of people as subhuman just because they disagree with you.

For the first time today I learnt that Obama's middle name was Hussein. How could the US have done this: not just an African /American but one with Muslim connections?



True, when we were in the US last autumn, it was obvious that he possessed a charisma that reached out to a huge variety of people; it needed to, for the mountain he had to climb was immense.

But it may turn out that that was the easy bit. He called for immense change in many fields of politics; now he and the American people have to deliver it. It will not be easy in a country that is very conservative and largely ignorant of the world beyond its national boundaries. But here is a man born in Hawaii of a father from Kenya. It may well take a person of such a hybrid descent to do it. We wait with baited breath; there is an awful lot hanging on him and his presidency.

The closing prayer of the inaugural ceremony was absolutely beautiful, a fitting end to a ceremony and a fitting beginning to this time of change. And it reminded me of the need and power of prayer. Obama and his administration are going to need all the prayer support possible, by the whole world, not just by the American people. Why not spend a little time of your daily devotion time to remember before God this young man and the task that lies before him?

*Stuart Veitch*

## Maisie Bunting



Just before Christmas we heard of the sudden death of Maisie Bunting. Though having moved to Cornwall in August 2006 to be near their daughter Margaret, Doug and Maisie were still very interested in the life of Stansted and kept in touch. Maisie had suffered with serious kidney problems for many years, but her death was unexpected; only days before her death she had been to a carol service at the Venterdon Methodist Church which they attended regularly since moving to Cornwall.

Amongst the music played at Maisie's funeral service at Venterdon Church on 31<sup>st</sup> December was Jerusalem, as Maisie was a W I member for many years. She was one of the founder members of Stansted Evening WI along with her sister Olive who died in March 2004. Maisie is pictured here last Summer with her other sister Doris.



Doug and Maisie were married in our church in June 1949 and were looking forward to and planning their Diamond wedding celebrations. We send our sympathy to Doug, Margaret, Geoff their son and all the family on their sad loss.

Janet Townsend

## Pilots

Our theme for this term is **Looking at the Bible**  
using Art & Craft, Music, Drama and games

Meetings for this term Mondays 6 - 7.30 pm  
January 26th, February 9th & 23rd, March 9th & 23rd

Valerie 813433

## An Invitation to Experience Worship in a Different Style

The Worship Leaders' Course made a very good start on 15th January, when sixteen people from Stansted Free Church and Bishop's Stortford Methodist churches gathered for the first session entitled 'Corporate Worship'.

Alongside the Worship Leaders' course, visits are being arranged to churches with different styles of worship. These visits are not restricted to those attending the course, and anyone is welcome to join us. Transport is being arranged. Provisional dates are as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> March	Holy Trinity Brompton & The Brompton Oratory
29 <sup>th</sup> March	Harlow Salvation Army
31 <sup>st</sup> May	Loughton Costa Coffee
21 <sup>st</sup> June	Black Pentecostal
19 <sup>th</sup> July	Vespers at Turvey Benedictine Abbey Bedford

Please contact us for further information.

*Stuart and Brenda Veitch*  
[worshipleadercourse@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:worshipleadercourse@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)



## Shalom

On 2nd February, Edna Goreing is leading an evening of prayer, music and readings. Catherine Dean will be leading a discussion about forgiveness at our meeting on 16th February. The basis for the discussion is a tape of an interview with an Anglican Priest whose daughter was killed by bombers; she subsequently resigned from the ministry, as she felt unable to completely forgive the bombers. Both meetings are 8 pm at 7 Blythwood Gardens. You are warmly welcomed - please join us!

*Marion Dyer 814059*

The next Traidcraft stalls will be after the service on Sundays 8th February and 8th March. There will also be a Fairtrade Stall and Coffee Morning on Wednesday 4th March at 10 am.

*Brenda*  
[fairtrade@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:fairtrade@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)





## Care Time



Christmas greetings were received from several friends this year who are unable to worship with us now, including Anthony and Katherine Cook and Ivor Thomas. Ivor sends his best wishes to everyone for 2009. At 96 years of age, Ivor has reluctantly finally given up driving because of dizzy spells, so cannot come to church but he welcomes any visitors to his home in Elsenham. He is very grateful for all the help he gets from his family and neighbours and is especially proud of his grandson Luke who has gained his PhD in Chemistry from London University.

Several members of our congregation have been unwell over the last few weeks but it is good to hear they are all recovering now and back with us, including Phyllis Harrison after her spell in hospital. Valerie Trundle is also making progress after her accident, albeit slowly. The news of her son Paul's engagement to Alison will help. We send Paul and Alison our congratulations and best wishes for their future in Utttoxeter.

### **I may be a saint but I don't want to be patronised!**

Did you know that between 1234 and 1978 there were fewer than 300 successful candidates for sainthood? And you may be surprised to learn that Pope John Paul II made 476 saints during his period in office from 1978 - 2005. Did you know there are patron saints for some unusual things. See if you can guess the patron saints of the following subjects. Answers next month:

- |                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Hairdressers? | 2. Alcoholics?  |
| 3. The Internet? | 4. Lawyers?     |
| 5. Orphans?      | 6. Rheumatism?  |
| 7. Musicians?    | 8. Undertakers? |

The Popes have been making saints since 1234. There's plenty of time for you to become one, given the unlikely subjects above that others have been made saint for!!

*Alan Wheeler*

# **Stansted Free Church**

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### **Sunday Service**

10.30 am      Morning Worship

### **Children's Work**

**Alternate Mondays** 6 pm Pilots for children aged 5 - 18 years.

Valerie Trundle Tel 813433 Email: [pilots@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:pilots@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)