

Imagine!

February
2012



I imagine you had no idea what a church was for and you had to find out. Imagine you were plunged into this rather strange environment called a church and you had to figure out what was going on. Just as with any new skill you might go on an 'intro' course to build up your understanding. There you might find out that a church was for worship and fellowship and following someone called Jesus Christ. Rather dauntingly you might find out that following this person meant emulating the way this Jesus Christ lived. I imagine that when you found out the suffering he went through you might decide following was not for you.

Imagine you stuck with it though. It wouldn't be long before you discovered that this Jesus was interested in **you** taking good news out to other people. Supposing you found this too was a bit daunting. I imagine you might want to go on another course to find out how to do that as well. Imagine this Jesus also started saying things like "This church is luke warm. It needs a good wake up call!". Going on a course might be a suitable response to that wake up call; to find out how the church could become vibrant, exciting and appealing to the people out there who weren't convinced that church was a good thing at all. You'd want to do that of course without spoiling all the things that made church interesting and reassuring to you in the first place, but you might need to learn some new skills to rethink that church, to make it even more obedient to following Jesus Christ.

Let's imagine this course was ready to go and available for you to start at the end of February and that Jesus was saying "Now is the time to retrain to become church in the 21st century". Take a look on page 4 and you will find that course is already here - **MISSION SHAPED INTRO**. We hope you will join this course along with friends from the other churches in Stansted, so that we can open our eyes to where Jesus is leading us.

Alan Wheeler



Care Time



Please pray for the family of Brenda Scarr, who died recently. Brenda attended our church and was a well loved and respected member of the Stansted community. She was very actively involved with the Day Centre, Uttlesford Community Travel and the Red Cross.

We also remember Doris Lambdon, mother-in-law of Alan Wheeler, undergoing chemotherapy; and others in our wider church family who need our prayers, and those no longer able to attend church.

Betty

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The next edition of **Imagine** will be available on Sunday 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. 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 February

Worship at Stansted Free Church

5th 10.30 am The Worship Team - new Directions

12th **10.45 am** Rev'd David Keeble & Rev'd Paul Wilkin

Please note change of time

19th 10.30 am Rev'd Stuart Veitch

26th 10.30 am Jerry Heyhoe

**Services are being held in the hall during January and February
Morning worship is followed by coffee. All are welcome.**

Other Activities

Sun 5th 11.30 am Fairtrade goods on sale after service

Mon 6th 6.00 pm Pilots in the Hall

7.30 pm Churches Together AGM and Carers' UK Talk
St John's Church

Mon 13th 8.00 pm Shalom discussion - 7 Blythwood Gardens

Mon 20th 6.00 pm Pilots in the Hall

Mon 27th 8.00 pm Circuit Finance Meeting in the Hall

8.00 pm Shalom at Home - 62 St John's Road

Wed 29th 8.00 pm Mission Shaped Intro in the Hall

Mission Shaped Intro

Wednesdays 8 - 9.30 pm - see pages 4-5 for details

29th February Rediscovering mission and what that means
for church

7th March Changing world, changing church

14th March Re-imagining church - community

21st March Re-imagining church - worship

28th March Re-imagining church - leadership and discipleship

**It is not essential to attend every session - come when you can
All welcome - see you there!**



Mission Shaped Intro

New world, new church? Our world and our lives have changed radically in the last twenty years, but has the church adapted to this change? Do we need a changed church for a changing world? Are new forms of church really possible? If so, how can they be developed? *Mission shaped intro* explores the 'why' of creating fresh expressions of church rather than the 'how'. The six-week course takes you on a journey looking at the ever-changing nature of our social communities and explores why the church needs to rethink its approach to those communities in meaningful and relevant ways. The 90-minute sessions are delivered through presentation, movie clips and stories with active group participation. The course is part of *Fresh Expressions*, which encourages and resources new ways of being church. This six-week course is not designed to give clear cut answers or to arrive at any definite outcomes but rather to draw a response from participants that will lead to action on their part. The Fresh Expressions ethos is not to have all the answers and to learn from what God is doing around us and join in with Him. The format of the 6th session (Where do we go from here?) is still to be decided.

The sessions will be held in our hall on the following Wednesdays from 8 – 9.30 pm, led jointly by Revs David Keeble and Paul Wilkin:

29th February

1. Rediscovering mission and what that means for church

The mission of God as the foundation for any expression of church.

- 1 Introducing Mission-shaped Church:
 - About the report;
 - Stories of fresh expressions.
- 2 Our changing world:
 - How our world is constantly changing and our response to this;
 - A mixed economy for a changing world.
- 3 What does a mission-shaped church look like?
 - What is mission?
 - Five marks of mission.

7th March 2. Changing world, changing church

Explore how the rise of both consumerism and networking have affected our culture and how the church might respond.

- 1 Thinking about culture and consumerism
 - What is culture?
 - Culture - friend or foe?
- 2 Thinking about networks
 - Introduction to networks;
 - Identifying networks we belong to;
 - Our response.

14th March 3. Re-imagining church - community

Explore the need for fresh expressions of church to be community-focussed.

- 1 Who do we exist for?
 - The focus of society on self-centred spirituality;
 - What kind of community do we belong to?
 - Community within the church;
 - Open to community around us.

21st March 4. Re-imagining church - worship

Explore how fresh expressions of church are re-imagining worship.

- 1 What is worship?
 - Exploring different facets of worship;
 - Creative worship;
 - How do we change worship?

28th March 5. Re-imagining church - leadership and discipleship

Explore the type of leadership needed in fresh expressions of church and how to facilitate discipleship.

- 1 Valuing creativity
 - Made in the image of God;
 - Leadership;
 - What does leadership look like in a FE of church?
 - Exploring leadership models.
- 2 Discipleship
 - Definition of discipleship;
 - Developing discipleship in fresh expressions.



WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

(International and Interdenominational)

LET JUSTICE PREVAIL



2 pm Friday 2nd March Stansted Free Church

Speaker Christine Heyhoe

On Friday 2nd March over 3 million people world-wide will be praying and worshipping together using a form of service prepared by Christian women in Malaysia, beginning in Tonga and continuing around the world until the final service takes place 35 hours later in neighbouring Western Samoa. By then the day will have been celebrated in over 170 countries and more than 6,000 services will have been held in the British Isles alone.

Malaysia is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country, which has attracted migrants from other parts of Asia and beyond and is now one of the wealthiest and most developed countries in South East Asia. Women have made important contributions to its social and economic development but still face discrimination and violence at all levels of society. Even today a girl is seen as less valuable than a boy. Malaysia is now the most popular destination in Asia for migrant workers, and human trafficking has become a sophisticated and organised operation. Although Malaysia's multi-ethnicity has added to the rich heritage of its land and people, it has also given rise to many problems. In the service, those issues of concern are voiced. Justice for all is their hope, and their prayer is "Let Justice Prevail".

Although organised and led by women, this is essentially a day of prayer for everybody, as we demonstrate our solidarity with our sisters and brothers in other countries; all are welcome to attend. Further information can be found on the WWDP website at www.wwdp-natcomm.org.

Come and join Stansted's celebration at 2 pm in Stansted Free Church.

All welcome - men and woman! Please contact me for more details.

Brenda Veitch

Pilots

We meet this term on Mondays at 6pm:

6th & 20th February, 5th & 19th March, 2nd April (to be confirmed as this is during the Easter Holidays). Our theme is The Olympic Games.

With the help of Juliet Richards we are hoping to take part in the village Good Friday project.

In June, as a contribution to the Queen's Jubilee Celebrations, we hope to put together a small exhibition of photographs, showing Pilot activities over the last few years.

Valerie Trundle

Historic URC and C of E Service in Westminster Abbey

The Church of England and United Reformed Church are to hold a historic service in Westminster Abbey, marking a significant step forward in the development of a shared relationship. This will take place on Tuesday 7th February 6.15 - 7.30 pm, in the year of the 350th Anniversary of the Act of Uniformity and the Great Ejection, as well as the celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the United Reformed Church.

The service, arising out of the joint report 'Healing of Memories' which has been to General Synod and the United Reformed Church Mission Council, will be a service of Reconciliation, Healing of Memories and Mutual Commitment. There will be testimonies about martyrs of the past and stories of shared work in the present, leading to an act of commitment for the future. Copies of the report are available on the URC website, www.urch.org.uk.

Tickets are available from the United Reformed Church Ecumenical Office, telephone 020 7916 8652, email ecumenical@urch.org.uk

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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