



I magine your daughter announced that she was going to be a member of the Peace Brigade International. It smacks of something unnerving doesn't it? So what is it? Peace Brigade International (PBI) is a global Human Rights group who employ unarmed bodyguards to provide protection for people all over the world who are fighting for the rights of their own people, and as a result are themselves in danger. It is very dangerous in places like Columbia to fight for the rights of the oppressed. Six people of an organisation called Credos that do that very thing were killed in one year. Then PBI provided 'bodyguards' and the killing stopped immediately. As you would imagine, it is frightening work being an unarmed bodyguard when the other side are armed to the teeth, and not just with guns and knives, but with hatred, greed and power.

And who do you imagine those volunteers were? Young men and women perhaps just like your daughter, 25 to 35 years old, from Europe and North America, from all sorts of backgrounds. Their training includes how to handle fear! They are working in places like Columbia, Guatemala, Mexico and Nepal. They often live with the families, providing 365 days of cover through just being there. Whilst the death squads would not stop for a moment before killing a family, or even a whole village, killing a foreigner would be another matter; they know it would create an international incident, and their bosses won't want that. It's on this apparently idealistic theory that PBI volunteers work.

Christian Aid supports groups like PBI, as well as working within the very communities where PBI volunteers are involved. Like a lot of the work of Christian Aid, it goes largely un-noticed and un-sung - yet this is a story that should be shouted from the roof tops.

Doesn't Christian Aid deserve supporting, when you hear something of what they do? Not only is it doing excellent work on the ground like schooling children, funding many small development programmes in farms, industry and commerce, but it is doing some spectacular work with the most unexpected people, like funding the young unarmed bodyguards who feel the issues facing some people are worth taking extraordinary risks to offer protection to them and their families. I just can't imagine how I'd feel if my daughter came to tell me that she had volunteered for the PBI, but I would be mighty proud of her.

Stuart Veitch

Christian Aid week runs from 13th - 20th May.

More collectors are always needed. Please contact Catherine if you can help.



Care Time



We remember Doris Lambdon, mother-in-law of Alan Wheeler, undergoing chemotherapy; Arthur Law, following his recent heart attack; others in our wider church family who need our prayers; and those no longer able to attend church.

Please also use the prayer slips which are available in the foyer for those to be remembered during our Sunday worship.

Betty

The next edition of **Imagine** will be available on Sunday 27th May. Please submit articles by Friday 18th May 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 May

Worship at Stansted Free Church

- 6th 10.30 am The Worship Team - New Directions Who Cares?
6.30 pm Circuit Easter Offering Service
- 13th 10.30 am Rev'd David Keeble and others
Mission Shaped Intro
- 20th 10.30 am Sarah Devereux
- 27th 10.30 am Christine Heyhoe

Morning worship is followed by coffee. All are welcome.

Special Services this Month

6th May 6.30 pm Easter Offering Service

This year's service is entitled *Entertaining Angels: Transforming Encounters in Mission*, and the speakers are George and Mione Goldspink.

13th May 10.30 am Mission Shaped Intro

This service will be rather different from our usual Sunday Worship. It will provide an opportunity to hear the key messages from the *Mission Shaped Intro* course, and includes video clips of examples of new ways of 'being church'. This is a key part of our mission to meet the needs of the community in Stansted, and we do hope you will be able to join us.

Other Activities

- Sun 6th 11.30 am Fairtrade goods on sale after service
- Wed 9th 7.45 pm Mission Shaped Intro Session 6 in the Hall
- Mon 14th 6.00 pm Pilots in the Hall
8.00 pm Shalom 7 Blythwood Gardens
Bring a news or magazine item to discuss
- Mon 21st 9.30 am Church Oversight Group 7 Blythwood Gdns
- Sun 27th 11.30 am Fairtrade goods on sale after service
- Mon 28th 6.30 pm Pilots in the Hall
8.00 pm Shalom at Home 13 Blackbushe, B Stortford

Stansted Free Church
Methodist / URC
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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