

Imagine!

October
2015



I magine packing up your belongings and leaving the place you have called home. Imagine leaving your neighbours, friends and faith community, the people you have loved and with whom you have shared so many sad and joyful memories. Imagine travelling to an unknown place where you know no-one, where the landscape is unfamiliar and roads lead in every direction to who-knows-where? Once you belonged and felt secure; here you are the stranger in the midst.

How easy it was for me to pack up my possessions and be transferred safely and efficiently from Poole to Saffron Walden. We packed on Monday, moved on Tuesday and were pretty much settled in by Wednesday. We arrived to a hamper of goodies and a bunch of flowers and every day the post brought colourful cards welcoming us to our new home. How blessed we are! Imagine, by contrast, the plight of the thousands of men, women and children seeking refuge within Europe. Imagine the grievous parting from friends, neighbours and family they may never see again; imagine the wrench of leaving behind the houses and businesses they have worked so hard to build. Not for them a quick transition from home to home and a warm welcome in a ready-made community; rather, a long and arduous journey to an uncertain destination where they will reside as aliens for months and years, longing to make a new home while living with the memories of that left behind.

"You are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt", the Lord commands Israel. (Deut 12.9) "Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it" (Heb 13.2).

Thank you for your welcome! May the Lord enable us all to welcome the strangers in our community as Christ has welcomed us.

In Christian love,

Caroline



Care Time



We continue to pray for Caroline and Paul Vodden as they settle in Saffron Walden, and for Caroline as she begins her ministry with the WEBS pastorate; for Arthur following his daughter's move to Australia; for Cherry; for the WEBS bible studies; and for the Churches Together in Stansted first Messy Church event on 4th October.

A message from Roy

In the rush of celebrating birthdays and preparing for the induction, I have not got round to saying thank you for the card and gift from Stansted for my 60th Birthday. I was really touched that you all should remember me in this way. So thank you again.

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The next edition of **Imagine** will be available on Sunday 25th October. Please submit articles by Friday 16th October 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 OCTOBER

Worship at Stansted Free Church

- 4th 10.30 am Rev'd Caroline Vodden - New Directions
11th 10.30 am Rev'd Stuart Veitch - Communion
18th 10.30 am Rev'd Roy Fowler
25th 10.30 am Richard Lewnsey

Other Church Activities

- Sun 4th 3.30 pm Messy Church at St Mary's School
Tue 6th 7.30 pm Churches Together Forum at St John's Church
Mon 12th 8.00 pm Shalom at 7 Blythwood Gardens
Sat 17th 10.00 am Fairtrade Coffee Morning in the Foyer
Sun 18th 11.30 am Fairtrade goods on sale after service
3.00 pm Celtic Communion at Newport URC
6.00 pm Village Harvest Supper at St John's Hall
Wed 21st 2.30 pm and 7.30 pm WEBS Bible Study at Newport URC
Mon 26th 8.00 pm Shalom at Home 13 Blackbushe, B Stortford
Sat 31st 10.00 am Church Meeting in the Hall
10.00 am Shoe Box Collection Morning in the Foyer

CHURCH MEETING

The Church Meeting on Saturday 31st October at 10 am, is also our AGM when we re-appoint our office holders and representatives to other meetings and organisations. We will also be continuing our discussions on the layout of the church. We hope many of you will be able to attend and give your opinions.

MESSY CHURCH COMES TO STANSTED!

Sunday 4th October 3.30 - 5 pm St Mary's School, Foresthall Park

An **exciting** and **informal** style of church for families, with activities, celebration and food (all based on a Christian theme), and an emphasis on **FUN!** Arranged by Churches Together in Stansted, our church has been very involved in the planning. We are looking for people to help with the activities on the day (please contact Marion), and to provide sandwiches and cakes (please contact Carol). For general information please contact Marion & Mike.

NEWS from WEBS

Celtic Communion

Newport United Reformed Church 3 pm
Sundays 18th October, 15th November

Autumn Bible Studies - The Missionary Journeys of Paul

Led by Caroline at Newport United Reformed Church

Wednesdays 30th September, 21st October, 25th November
Afternoon 2.30 - 4 pm or Evening 7.30 - 9 pm

For the 350th Anniversary Service at Abbey Lane, John Ellis chose the passage in Acts 16 where St Paul sails to Neapolis, meets Lydia from Thyatira and establishes the church in Philippi. Two years ago I had the privilege of undertaking a pilgrimage 'in the steps of St Paul' through Greece, staying at the port of Neapolis, visiting the ruins of Roman Philippi and continuing to Thessalonica, Berea, Athens and Corinth. Last year I visited Lydia's home town of Thyatira, together with Ephesus and the locations of the other five churches of Asia Minor to which the Lord writes in the Revelation of John. This autumn I return to Turkey to visit Paul's birthplace of Tarsus and other locations of his three missionary journeys through Galatia, Cappadocia, Cilicia and Pamphylia. Join me (Caroline) as we explore Paul's travels in Acts and the churches to whom he wrote his letters.

WELCOME TO REV'D CAROLINE VODDEN



We are delighted to welcome Caroline, along with husband Paul and daughter Alice.

Caroline and Roy are both ministers for the whole of the WEBS pastorate.

Roy has particular responsibility for Stansted, Clavering and Bishops' Stortford churches; Caroline is a part time minister and has responsibility for Saffron Walden (with Newport) church.



COFFEE MORNING

Sat 17th October 10 am -12 noon
Stansted Free Church Foyer

Books ~ Bric-à-Brac

Fairly-traded Food, Drinks, Cards & Gifts

Bring and Buy

Everyone Welcome

Tel 815819 for more information

The One World Week theme for 2015 is 'Hope in Action'

Inspiring a culture of hope to build a more equal and peaceful world

The theme stems from the concerns that much of the conflict we see around us in the world today arises from inequality

We need to come together to tackle inequality before resentment and anger spill over into violence.

There is no true peace without justice



Village Harvest Supper

St John's Church Hall

Sunday 18th October 2015

6 - 8.30 pm

*Fish, Chicken or Veggie Burger & Chips
followed by
entertainment from the churches*

A great evening out for all the family

Tickets £6 ~ Schoolchildren £5

Tickets must be purchased in advance
please tel
814059

Bring your own drink & glass - All Welcome

THANK YOU

The Induction service was a beginning for Caroline and WEBS but it brought to a close the particular relationship that I have enjoyed with you as your Interim Moderator. In the service I mentioned my gratitude for the way we had worked together to forge a new pastorate, and to explore fresh understandings of what ministry is. I also thanked you for the lovely friendship that so many of you have shown me and I gladly reiterate those sentiments here.



However, I must add further words of appreciation, for the very generous and thoughtful gifts you presented to me afterwards. The book token, carafe, glasses and fermented grape juice were so thoughtful, and Bethan and I were deeply touched to receive them. I have had a happy three years serving

amongst you, and your presents will be lasting reminders of what we did together, and of what you have become to me.

I close with prayerful good wishes to you all.

CAPTION COMPETITION



Picture of Roy and Alan taken at the back of the church shortly after Roy arrived to take the service one Sunday morning

Please pass your suggested caption to one of the editors:
Alan Wheeler, Mike & Marion Dyer
or email:
news@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

The best one will be printed next month!

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

Contacts

Minister

Revd Roy Fowler (day off Monday)

Email: minister@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

WEBS Minister

Revd Caroline Vodden

Church Secretary

Betty Francis Email: info@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Church Notices

Marion Pretty

Lettings

Mike & Marion Dyer

Email: lettings@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Newsletter Editors

Alan Wheeler Mike & Marion Dyer

Email: news@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Treasurers

Alan Wheeler Marion Dyer

Email: treasurer@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Fairtrade

Brenda Veitch

Email: fairtrade@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

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 Wednesday and Friday 9.30 am - 12.30 pm

Tel Marion & Mike, Catherine & Alan or Fran

Email: theplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk