

Imagine!

Aug
2017



I imagine what it would be like if the weather was totally predictable, and every day was perfect without a cloud in the sky. This thought was prompted by a conversation I had with three of our regular visitors to *The Place* on a recent Friday morning.

One remarked that she had a disturbed night because her neighbours had made lots of noise as they set off on holiday very early in the morning. However, she did concede that it would be peaceful for the next three weeks whilst they were away. My rather obvious response was that every cloud has a silver lining. Imagine my surprise when another visitor challenged me with the provocative question - "Does it follow that every silver lining has a cloud?" Before I could think of a helpful response, a third person reminded me of what Harold Fisher, one of our previous ministers, once said: "Our lives consist of a series of ups and downs, and it is difficult to imagine one without the other." Of course one person's *down* might be an *up* for somebody else, because each of us is unique.

Imagine what it must have been like for the blind man who was healed by Jesus. What a wonderful feeling he must have had. However, the vast majority of us do not get excited about being able to see every morning. Our Friday conversation then developed into the notion that our personal ups and downs are analogous to the battle between good and evil in the world. Imagine trying to define one without alluding to the other.

We ended up talking about the game of snakes and ladders, which is a good illustration of life's ebb and flow, but ignores God's grace. The game is random, whereas God gives us the strength to develop our virtues (ladders) whilst defeating our vices (snakes). We concluded that there will always be clouds and silver linings, but God keeps us safe whatever the weather.

Mike Dyer

David Mullins' Farewell Services

David's last service at [Stansted](#) was on 25th June. It was a lovely service and we were very pleased that he brought his guitar and played with the musicians. We decided to have our own leaving collection rather than contribute to the Circuit one, and the picture on the right below shows David opening his gift.



The following day, David sent this message: *I just want to express my thanks to all at Stansted for their lovely card and the generous gift card that I was presented with at the close of yesterday's service. It really took me by surprise - I wasn't expecting it at all. So a huge Thank You to everyone at SFC! With very best wishes, David*

On 23rd July, the churches in the [Bishop's Stortford Methodist Circuit](#) plus a number of David's friends joined for a farewell service, followed by lunch, when David's guitar was again in evidence, accompanying singing with Don McGregor!



Rev'd Stuart Veitch is acting Superintendent until the beginning of September

We pray for David, Louise and Jenni Mullins as they prepare for the start of David's retirement and their move to St Albans; and for Rev'd Gill and Graham Hulme as they prepare for their move to Bishop's Stortford.

CHURCH GIVING

Over the past five years, the weekly cost of running the church (excluding major repairs) has gone from £350 to over £500 (an increase of over 40%). Unfortunately, regular giving has not kept pace with this increase, and we invite you to consider whether you are in a position to increase your weekly or monthly offering. Thank you. *Alan and Marion (Treasurers)*

The magnificent sum of £750 was sent to Action for Children in memory of Phyllis Harrison - a very fitting tribute to such a wonderful lady

WHAT'S ON IN AUGUST

Worship at Stansted Free Church

6th 10.30 am The Bible Society - New Directions
13th 10.30 am Rev'd Roy Fowler
20th 10.30 am Julie Finbow
27th 10.30 am Rev'd Roy Fowler - Communion

SUNDAY 6TH AUGUST - BIBLE SOCIETY

Instead of our usual Sunday Service we will have an illustrated talk by Janice Phillips, a volunteer with the Bible Society. Last year Phyllis Harrison asked if we could have a speaker from this organisation and we are very sad that she will not be present. There will be a retiring collection for the society.

Other Activities

Sat 5th 10 am - noon and 2 - 4 pm Roy and Christine Open House
Sun 6th 11.30 am Fairtrade goods on sale after the service
Thu 31st 7.30 pm Welcome Service for Rev'd Gill Hulme at B S Methodist



OPEN HOUSE at the Manse

Christine and Roy warmly invite you to
8 Birchalls, High Lane, Stansted CM24 8LQ

Saturday 5th August 10 am - noon and 2 - 4 pm

Please come and join us

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)

Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9.30 am - 12.30 pm
Tel Marion & Mike, Catherine & Alan or Fran
Email: theplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk