

# Imagine!



Dec  
2017

**I**magine a world without light. At the North and South Poles there is darkness for six months of the year while the sun stays below the horizon; but throughout the long winter there is always six months of summer daylight to look forward to. Just before Christmas in the Northern Hemisphere we will pass the winter solstice and begin to enjoy the promise of lighter days. The prophet Isaiah declared: "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death, a light has dawned." (Isaiah 9.2)

Imagine a world without joy. No smiles, no laughter. No singing, no dancing, no parties. Only downturned faces and heavy hearts. Isaiah, speaking to the exiled people of God, continued his good news: "You [Lord] have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest." (Isaiah 9.3)

Imagine a world without peace. No reconciliation, no forgiveness, no sharing.

On Christmas Eve 1914, in the midst of the First World War, the guns fell silent as strains of 'Silent Night' echoed across the Western Front and, in the morning light, enemies shook hands and exchanged gifts. "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given.... and he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9.6)

Imagine a world without God's precious only Son. It's unimaginable. May the light of Christ shine on you this Christmas, fill you with joy and bring peace to all people as we move into a New Year with all its promises and opportunities.

In Christian love

*Caroline*



# Care Time



We pray for:

Marion, the family of Phyllis, and those who will be spending their first Christmas without loved ones; Desiree, that a suitable place will be found for her soon; Judy as she travels to Australia; Brenda as she awaits further treatment; The Place on the Hill Christmas Events; the Churches Together in Stansted Christmas Events; and others in our wider church family who need our prayers.

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The next edition of **Imagine** will be available on 31st December. Please submit articles by Friday 22nd December 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.

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 DECEMBER

### Worship at Stansted Free Church

3rd	10.30 am	Mike Render
10th	10.30 am	Rev'd Roy Fowler - Communion
17th	10.30 am	Faith Paulding Gift Service (see below)
24th	10.30 am	Carol Service (see below)
25th	10.30 am	Rev'd Roy Fowler - Christmas Day Family Service
31st	10.30 am	Jerry Heyhoe

### Other Activities

Sat 2nd	5.30 pm	Advent Remembrance Service at S Walden URC (p 5)
Wed 6th	8.00 pm	Circuit meeting at B Stortford Methodist
Sun 10th	11.30 am	Fairtrade goods on sale after the service
Mon 11th	8.00 pm	LPWL Meeting at B Stortford Methodist
	8.00 pm	Shalom Party at 62 St John's Road
Sat 16th	3.00 pm	Celebration of Christmas at St John's Church (p 6)
Mon 18th	10.00 am	The Place on the Hill Christmas Event (p 4)
Wed 20th	10.00 am	The Place on the Hill Christmas Event (p 4)
Fri 22nd	10.00 am	The Place on the Hill Christmas Event (p 4)
Fri 22nd	7.00 pm and Sat 23rd 3.30 pm	Carol Singing (p 7)

### Gift Service 17th December

We will be collecting items for the Whitechapel Mission which provides thousands of breakfasts to homeless people each year, and has the largest clothing store in London for the homeless. Items urgently needed are:

**Food:** Baked Beans, Plum Tomatoes (not chopped), Sugar, Coffee, Honey, Biscuits, Instant Hot Chocolate

**Toiletries:** toothbrushes, razors, shampoo, deodorant, soap

**Clothes etc:** men's underwear, socks, men's trainers and shoes, jeans waist 28-36", trousers waist 28-34", rucksacks, carrier bags, nail clippers

If you are not able to be at the service, donations may be left in the vestry, but please label for Whitechapel. Thank you.

### Carol Service 24th December

Betty is arranging our carol service and would like suggestions of carols and readings to be included - please let her know by 15th December



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twitter @placeonthehill

**Christmas Events**  
**Mon 18th, Wed 20th and Fri 22nd Dec**  
**10 am - 11.30 am**

**Come and join the fun making**  
**Christingles followed by a visit from**  
**Father Christmas**

**There will also be a video of the**  
**Christmas Story**  
**which is suitable for all ages**

**All Welcome - do come along on any or all of the days, even if**  
**you do not normally attend The Place**

**The Place** is open Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays 9.30 am - 12.30 pm  
**but we will be closed on Mondays 25th December & 1st January**

For more details contact Marion & Mike  
Email: [theplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:theplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)



## SHOEBOXES



A total of 211 boxes were packed this year by St Theresa's Wednesday Club, visitors to the Place on the Hill, and at the packing evening. Thank you to all who helped or brought completed boxes – because of you many children in Liberia will experience the delight of opening a special Christmas box filled with wonderful goodies.

**There were 30 boxes from The Place on the Hill. Special thanks**  
**to those who helped pack or brought completed boxes**

Catherine

# A Service of Remembrance for Advent



**5.30 pm Saturday 2nd December  
Abbey Lane United Reformed Church  
Saffron Walden**

You are warmly invited to join us for this special service on the Saturday before Advent, which will include an Act of Remembrance and the dedication of a lighted Christmas tree in memory of those we have loved.

Christmas is a time of joy and hope, but it is touched with sadness as we remember family and friends who are no longer with us to share the celebrations.

We thank God for his gift of love in Jesus Christ and pray that all may know his comfort and peace this Christmas.

*The service will be followed by light refreshments*



**STANSTED FOODBANK**

The foodbank is well stocked and does not require any items at the present time. Thank you to all those who have donated. We will probably start collecting again early in the new year.

*Catherine*



# Celebration of Christmas Carols and Readings

with contributions from villagers,  
local schools & churches

**3 pm Saturday 16th December**  
**St John's Church**

Followed by mulled wine & soft drinks

*All are welcome to join the choir  
- come along and have some fun!*

*Choir Rehearsals in St John's Church  
7.15 - 8.15 pm Thursdays 30th Nov  
7th & 14th Dec*

Collection for Christian Aid Rohingya Crisis Appeal  
which is supporting vulnerable people in Myanmar

*Organised by Churches Together in Stansted*  
*[www.stanstedchurches.com](http://www.stanstedchurches.com)*



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# CAROL SINGING

in aid of

**Christian Aid Rohingya Crisis Appeal**  
which is supporting vulnerable people in Myanmar

**ALL WELCOME**

*Come & join the fun singing your  
favourite carols in Stansted  
Collectors also needed each day*

**Fri 22 Dec**  
7 pm

Meet behind Post Office  
Finish at St John's Rd 8.30 pm

**Sat 23 Dec**  
3.30 pm

Meet Hargrave House  
Finish at Rainsford Rd 5 pm



*Followed by seasonal refreshments*



# **Stansted Free Church (Methodist / URC)**

[www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](http://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)  
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### **WEBS Minister**

Rev'd Caroline Vodden

### **Methodist Superintendent**

Rev'd Gill Hulme

### **Church Secretary**

Betty Francis  
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Marion Pretty

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### **Fairtrade**

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

## **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](mailto:theplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)