



Inspire

The Newsletter of The Free Church (United Reformed) St Ives and Fenstanton URC

Thoughts for the month ahead.

Thoughts from the Church Secretary



I hope you enjoyed the Easter period and had some time to relax or catch up with family or friends.

Easter had a more familiar feel in St Ives this year, with the bonus of some nice weather too!

As well as our Easter services in the Free Church, the Good Friday Walk of Witness took place again and we had a successful Easter Monday snack bar. Extra volunteer help will again be very welcome on the next Bank Holiday on 2nd May.

It's great to continue welcoming new and returning groups who hire space in our building. Future events include concerts and an art exhibition at the end of the month.

We'll be restarting our Thursday afternoon meetings with some of the migrants who have recently moved into St Ives. Talking with them certainly puts into perspective some of our own challenges.

It's both rewarding and humbling, at a time when compassion, honesty and empathy seem in short supply amongst some of our world leaders and politicians. We need to stay open to opportunities, however small or insignificant they may seem, to act as channels for the Holy Spirit working in the world.

Looking more widely, Christian Aid Week starts on 15th May. The combined effects of the Covid pandemic, drought, and the war in Ukraine are driving up food prices around the world. As always, the poorest are suffering the most, and this year's theme encourages us to help turn hunger into hope.



Services this month:

	THE FREE CHURCH, ST IVES
1st May	Reverend Dr Catherine Ball - Holy Communion
8th May	Reverend Roy Muttram
15th May	Reverend Dr Catherine Ball
22nd May	Reverend Dr Catherine Ball
26th May <i>Ascension Day</i>	Reverend Dr Catherine Ball - Holy Communion at 10am
29th May	Reverend Dr Catherine Ball

	FENSTANTON URC
1st May	Reverend Peter Ball
8th May	Reverend Dr Catherine Ball - Holy Communion
15th May	Reverend Dr Catherine Ball
22nd May	Chris Baker
29th May	Christine Davies

After Covid forced us to cancel our March Church Meeting, we look forward to holding one on Sunday 15th May, after morning worship.

This is a good opportunity to share news and discuss future plans within our local church community and beyond. We look forward to seeing you there!

God bless, David

Read online at: www.stivesfreechurch.org or visit our **Facebook** page

The Free Church, Market Hill, St Ives, Cambs PE27 5AL

Contact us at: office@stivesfreechurch.org



Easter Bank Holiday Snack Bar

This nearly didn't happen as we struggled to get volunteers. However we managed to get enough people in the end.

Many thanks to all those who turned up on the day.

We took a total of over **£510**, after a busy day, which made it all worthwhile.

The next one is on **2nd May** and hopefully enough people will have signed the volunteer list on the landing for it to go ahead.

Mavis

MONTHLY MEDITATIONS

Hi folks,

Just a reminder that the meditation is once again on the **second Tuesday** of each month.

The date for this month will be on:

Tuesday 10th May.

The venue once again will be in the

Fenstanton URC at 2.30pm.

Please let me know if you cannot come and would like a written copy emailed to you.

My telephone number is: **01480 463117**. Thank you.

With every blessing,

John

Irene Comes Calling again...

HIDDEN TREASURES

MUSIC, NAN AND ME

Inspiration, captivation

Sat with Nanny at the keys.

Watched her fingers flying madly

Up and down with dainty ease.

Sat on a cushion, wibbly wobbly,

Plinking plonking happy me,

Praise she poured out with happy clapping

Not so bad for only three.

Dearest Nan she loved Piano

Hum a tune and she would play,

Never taught, but didn't need it,

Fingers blessed to play away.

Every week at Sunday teatime

After meals and dishes done,

All the family were gathered

Uncles, Aunties, everyone.

Round Piano, Cockney chorus,

Red Red Robin, My Old Man,

One song led to another

Happy days and jolly Nan!

Music was my fascination

Lessons soon though money tight,

What a gift my parents gave me

Working hard through day and night.

I am old now, bones are cranky

Music though casts it's spell,

My Piano calls, entices,

I know Nan would smile as well.

cc IRENE CARTER

MEET THE STAFF

GAIL WASE - OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR



What was the best part of your childhood?

Being a daughter of an RAF parent, we moved around a great deal and this led to the enjoyment of travelling.

What would you tell your school-leaver now?

Study well, get results and live in the moment and embrace the community and help whenever needed.

How about special interests and hobbies?

From my first job I really got into typesetting with various publications and designs. All the experience was valuable and met mostly interesting and various people which I still enjoy. By the time you read this, I'll be cruising!

What drew you to being a part of Free Church life?

I jumped at the possibility of being part of and getting to know a community within the Free Church, managing the various tasks required of me. Negotiating, chatting, helping and advising, when asked for, and no two days are ever the same.

Although I'm hidden in the office, I get around often to do different things so can make use of those differing things I learnt from the years before.

From the Church Secretary - Our Annual Return

Every year, as a URC church secretary I complete an annual return with information on our church life. This exercise is coordinated by Eastern Synod with statistics combined nationally. Form filling (albeit online) isn't my favourite task, and I was very grateful for the help and contributions from Catherine, Christine Macleod and Chris Curtis.

Here are some of the statistics submitted. At the end of 2021, we had 89 church members, compared with 92 a year earlier. Average attendance at Sunday worship was 40, down by 10 on 2020 which started pre-pandemic. However, we have been very pleased to welcome some new worshippers. So regular attendees who are not (yet!) church members rose from 10 to 12. Numbers participating in online worship declined from the peak of 40 as worship in the building returned. The number of children involved in midweek Tots and Carers has returned to its pre-pandemic figure of 20. Last year we had two infant baptisms, one infant blessing, one wedding, one marriage blessing, two funerals and two memorial services. This compares with 2020 when we were only able to hold one infant baptism, one wedding and one funeral.

Statistics only tell part of the story, and the fellowship, friendship and support which you provide each other can't be measured by numbers. No doubt 2022 will continue to provide its own opportunities and challenges, so who knows what we'll be reporting this time next year?

God bless,

David Duffett

CLIMATE CHANGE and BIOREGIONS...

... were mentioned when chatting with a neighbour!
He was upset by the dismal appearance of the azaleas and rhodies!
Classical example of plants not being in their natural habitat. (Bioregion)



The fruit orchards that used to surround our village, Oakington, are now mostly gone, the local clay was perfect for this crop; they have been replaced with estates and hundreds of acres of heavily sprayed grain.

If we grow what's suited to the area the plants will be strong and not need to be so intensely sprayed with herbicides, fungicide and insecticides which, of course, will bump up the final cost of the crop but worse, kill the dear little grass hoppers that we used to love and now miss.

Last summer I didn't see or hear a yellowhammer or bullfinch, did you? No shortage of blue tits though, all doing a wonderful job keepings the aphids at bay. Are the plants you grow in your gardens suited to your soil?

Here's a photo taken last summer of unsprayed sunflowers growing near Walsham le Willows on light, sandy Suffolk soil and adapting to climate change.



And a sprayed wheat field near Oakington (agricultural desert) that should be growing fruit or even cowslips.

The cowslip photo was taken on the farm of my cousin near Stratford-upon-Avon.



Love to you all,

Char

THANK YOU - FROM PAT AND JOHN HUMPHREY

We wanted to let you know how much we appreciated your prayers, cards and good wishes during the stay Pat had in hospital.

Also, she cannot praise the hospital enough!

Sincerest thanks to you all.

An invitation to the May meeting of the St Ives Free Church Poetry Group

on Thursday 26th May at 2.30pm in Tookeys Coffee Bar

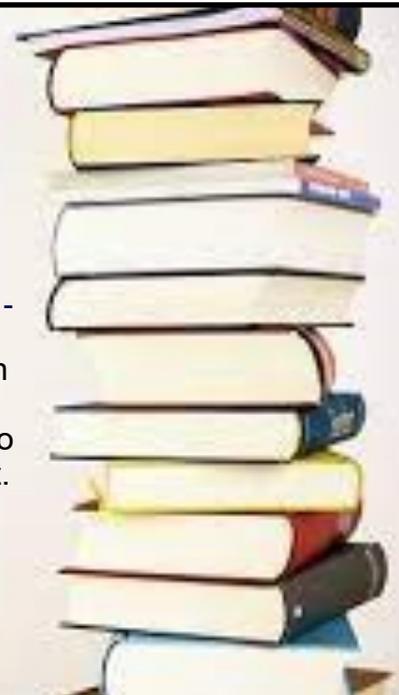
and to Bring Your Favourite Poem

You are warmly invited to our May meeting - details above.

We have now settled back to meeting in **Tookeys** again after meeting on Zoom through Covid - and we have changed to meeting in the afternoon for the present.

We would love to see you there.

For more information please contact Mary Cox on 01480 300103 or mary@jmcox.co.uk



EASTER CELEBRATIONS 2022

On Good Friday we gathered outside our church after the Walk of Witness from the Parish Church.



The Somersham Town Band were there to accompany the open air service.

This was followed by a Lent lunch in the Hall.

On Easter Day we gathered together to celebrate in the Holy Communion café-style service.



The singing rang out, much coffee and goodies shared and mini eggs delivered to all who were there.

All in all, a wonderful and memorable event.

FENSTANTON URC

The main board and name inset were made by:

MRJ Joinery, The Heath, Woodhurst PE28 3BP.

The carving on the top board was carved by Cameron, 07825 346365. He is on the B1040, somewhere near Fenton.



The slip-in name boards and the sign-writing was done by: **Michael Murray Signs Ltd, Montana, Pidley Road, Somersham, Huntingdon PE28 3ES.**

Watch for the notices for services and events happening here!

FENSTANTON KNITTERS AND NATTERS

We meet every Tuesday 10.00am -11.30am at the church here.

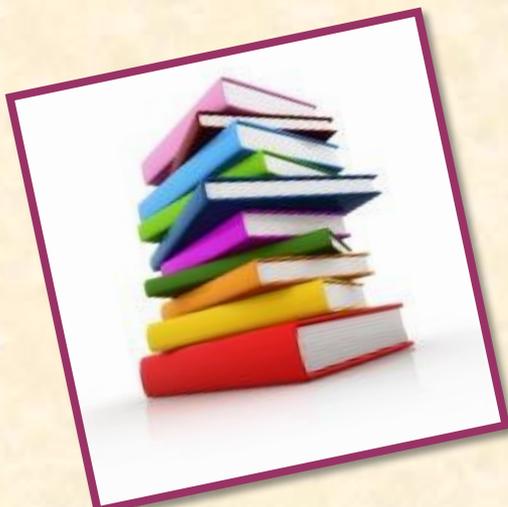
A lady from **Age UK** came to our last meeting. We were able to give her 500 Innocent Smoothies Hats.



These are put on Innocent Smoothie drinks in shops and profit goes to **Age UK**.

If you would like to join us just turn up!! You will be made welcome.

For more details please contact Jean on 01480 498221.



**FENSTANTON UNITED
REFORMED CHURCH**
CHEQUER STREET
BOOK SALE

SATURDAY 21st MAY

09.30am - 12 noon



**ALSO JIGSAWS ON
SALE!**



Welcome back, Tapestry!

'Typically Tapestry' was the title of the Lunchtime Concert given in March by the very popular 'A Capella' Tapestry Singers.

It was a carefully chosen programme of music to suit every taste, which included traditional pieces by Elgar, Byrd and Tallis as well as more modern close harmony arrangements.

All were well received by an appreciative audience. It was a delight to hear once again the distinct Tapestry sound in our building after a long absence due to covid restrictions.

Many past performances by Tapestry have been given in support of The Free Church and this lunchtime concert raised a brilliant **£120**.

Thank you, Tapestry - please come again. SD



CELEBRATE THE URC'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY 2022

This is an important year as the URC is marking this special year by holding several events around the country.

The Thanksgiving Service and Celebration of the URC's 50th anniversary will be held in London at the Methodist Central Hall, Westminster, Storey's Gate, London SW1 9NH on:

Saturday 1st October 2022 from 2.30pm to 5pm.

Check for tickets on the URC website and you can also find other events around the country at urc-eastern.org.uk/events



What's on in MAY



Mon - Sat	10:00	Chapel Prayers
Mon - Sat (<i>not Thu</i>)	10:00 - 15:00	Just Sharing shop
Mon - Sat (<i>not Thu</i>)	9:45 - 14:00	Tookeys Café
Mondays	9:30 - 13:30	Tookeys Snack Bar
	19:00 - 21:30	Indoor Bowls Club
Wednesdays	10:00 - 11:30	Tots & Carers
Sundays	11:00	Worship
Mon 2nd	10:30-12:00	Bereavement and Friendship group (CRUSE)
Wed 4th	11:00	U3A Current Affairs
	14:00-16:00	Senior Citizens Club
Thu 5th	09:45-10:45	Sunny Steps
	12:00-14:00	Keep Fit FaME (<i>Falls Management Exercise Programme</i>)
Sat 7th	10:00-15:30	Saints Crafters art and craft fair
Mon 9th	10:30-12:00	Bereavement and Friendship group (CRUSE)
Wed 11th	14:00-16:00	Senior Citizens Club
Thu 12th	09:45-10:45	Sunny Steps
	12:00-14:00	Keep Fit FaME (<i>Falls Management Exercise Programme</i>)
	12:00	W.I. in Tookeys
Mon 16th	10:30-12:00	Bereavement and Friendship group (CRUSE)
Tue 17th	10:00-12:00	Dementia Café

May Editors are:

Val Bush and Sarah Bateman

JUNE EDITION

If there's anything you'd like us to include in June's edition of Inspire, please email it to:

office@stivesfreechurch.org

Deadline to receive content is: **20/05**

NEXT CHURCH MEETING:

15th May

Wed 18th	11:00	U3A Current Affairs
	14:00-16:00	Senior Citizens Club
	19:30	HRAA Gardening Club
Thu 19th	09:15-14:00	Shirley's Coffee Shop in Tookeys
	09:45-10:45	Sunny Steps
	12:00-14:00	Keep Fit FaME (<i>Falls Management Exercise Programme</i>)
Fri 20th	10:00-12:00	U3A Local History
Sat 21st	10:00-12:00	Eco Action Group Climate Cafe
Mon 23rd	10:30-12:00	Bereavement and Friendship Group (CRUSE)
Wed 25th	14:00-16:00	Senior Citizens Club
	19:30	RSPB
Thu 26th	09:45-10:45	Sunny Steps
	12:00-14:00	Keep Fit FaME (<i>Falls Management Exercise Programme</i>)
	14:30	Poetry Club
Mon 30th	10:30-12:00	Bereavement and Friendship Group (CRUSE)

Contacts

Minister

Revd Dr Catherine Ball

01480 352058

Church Office

Gail Wase 468535

office@stivesfreechurch.org

Open 9am—1pm Mon/Wed/Fri

Room bookings should be made

through the Church Office

Church Secretary

David Duffett 395308

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Alan Curtis 350787

Fenstanton Ch Sec

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alan@stivesfreechurch.org

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Freewill Offering Treasurer

Babs Moore 352627

Safeguarding Lead

Christine Curtis 350787

Resident Musician

Brian Lodde 354647

Flower Convenor

Valerie Temple 466204

Chapel Prayer Coordinator

Joey Dyke 07787 370201

Tookey's Manager

Helen Yates 07921 462640

Just Sharing Manager

Sue Billings 496570

Assistant Manager

Rosemarie Smith

The Free Church is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.