



Dear Friends,

Today I awoke to what I'd call a 'proper' Autumn morning. Staplehurst and the surrounding villages had become *Brigadoon!

Our home sits on the Greensand ridge and, during the summer months, the country road hosts dozens of walkers and cyclists enjoying the view towards Staplehurst and beyond. They sip on bottled water whilst checking their maps, apps and posting pics to their family/favourite social media.



However, when Autumn arrives it's a different feel entirely. Morning arrives with thick mists which obliterate the world beyond our fence. Damp, cloudy tendrils curl up the garden and nearby chickens sound muted and doleful. The cockerel's crow, I'm positive, has a distinct likeness to "where arrrrrrr yooooou" His final flourish cascades down at least half an octave (you have to hear it to believe it!) Eventually the sun cuts through, the lovely, undulating countryside is still there and the magpies, unhampered by the mists have continued the hunt for breakfast throughout.

So, this morning, as I watched the mist fall away, I remembered and was grateful for God's faithfulness because He has promised that He too will always be there; ever present as Shepherd, Guide, Comforter and Saviour.

When difficult things happen, and threaten to immobilise us, there is power in determining to shift focus back to God – leaning into Him through the difficulties that rise like that mist.

We are not on our own. He has always been there; it is His very nature to be faithful. Remember the sense of His Presence in the middle of the night? A kind card received confirming words read recently in the Bible. The sense of peace or joy welling up within us unexpectedly; all moments when we've known, *really* known...

Psalm 139:16 comforts me explaining that God already knew absolutely everything about me – even before I was born.

"...all the days planned for me were written in Your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, God!"

If, in His love for me, God knew all about this day from the very beginning, He was already invested in my life, experience and the outcomes. How wonderful!!

The psalm also says, "even the darkness will not be dark to You; the night will shine as the day."

Whether it's mist or darkness, neither are a match for the Creator of all things Who said "let there be light"

So, back to that noisy cockerel. I think, maybe, just maybe he is a God-sent reminder.

After all, aren't those words music to God's ears?

When we call 'where are You?' be sure He is always ready to answer, in or out of the mist!

(Psalm 91:15)

God bless,

Mary

**Brigadoon a fictional story taken to the big screen in 1955. It tells of a mysterious Scottish village which only appears once in every hundred years!*

Welcomers Rota - October

Sunday 3rd - Kate and Peter

Sunday 10th - Jo and Clive

Sunday 17th - Adri and David

Sunday 24th - Brenda and Graham

Sunday 31st - Mavis and Nic



Churches Together in Staplehurst

The next joint churches evening service

will be held at the URC on Sunday 31st

October at 6.30pm



Surface Deadline For inclusion in the November edition of Surface Magazine - please send all copy to Kate M by **Thursday 21st October**. If you no longer wish to receive this magazine, please contact the church administrator to **unsubscribe**. Many thanks!

SFC Interest Group

Responses in the Staplehurst Millennium Appraisal comments were that there were few activities for residents to take part in during the daylight hours. In March 2002, we invited people to come to our home and discuss what their interests were. Staplehurst Interest Group was born and blossomed to the extent that a hall was sought in which to meet. In January 2004 we moved our weekly sessions to the Schoolroom behind the URC. Covid has now focussed thinking that the accommodation there was not meeting our needs and so alternatives were explored. We are delighted that we can be accommodated on Friday mornings in the SFC café room.

We have always welcomed everyone from the local area to join us, some regularly travelling from Headcorn and Loose as well as from Staplehurst. Our programme is suggested by members and is very varied. We have agreed to start Interest Group from 10am till noon **on Friday 15th October**. This morning will be for familiarisation with the SFC, to enjoy a catch-up with friends and discuss the many implications of this change of venue. We will explain where our finances stand and members may also have some excellent ideas as to what they would like to include in the programme ahead.

22nd October **Music and poetry** a regular favourite – bring a CD track and/or poems you enjoy to share with us all

29th October **Calling All Bluffers** – get those brain cells back into action to decide which of the three unlikely definitions fits with the word displayed

We will be delighted if you would like to join us.

Best wishes from Joan and Malcolm Buller





Care for the Family - Online Events Autumn 2021

Many of you will have come across Care for the Family in the past. It is a national charity that aims to strengthen family life and help those who face family difficulties.

This autumn sees a range of on-line resources to aid your family life

A Mind of Their Own - Building our Children's Emotional Wellbeing

Raising Teens - Off Script

Boundary Lines - Setting Loving Limits in the Early Years

Run the Race - the realities of perseverance for men today

Deeper Rooted - an event for women - growing resilience in every situation

Further details can be found on their website <https://careforthefamily.org.uk>

Super-Hero Party

On Sunday 31st October between 4.30 and 6.30pm we are holding a Super-hero party at the church. This is for primary school aged children and is an alternative to the Halloween activity of trick or treat.

To ring the changes we have chosen a super-hero theme this year rather than light and we will be looking at Bible super-heroes, in particular Joshua, who didn't have any special powers apart from his ability to trust and obey God. We hope the children will go away with the message that when we are afraid or worried we can ask God for help and He will fight for us.

The party will involve singing, story, drama, crafts, eating and more singing. We would love to have a good, strong team of helpers to ensure this event goes smoothly and is enjoyed by everyone. Whether you're a pro with a tea pot, have perfect aim with the Pritt Stick or love nothing better than doing actions to songs, we would welcome your support and help.

Please let Corinne or Kate Henry know if you are able to help.



New Name for GideonsUK

We are now **GOOD NEWS for Everyone!** Isaiah 43 : 19 says “See I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland”. This is a verse we have had before us very much at SFC over the past 2 years. This has also over the same period become a theme for us in the Association.

God has called us to a new season as we respond to Jesus words in Mark 16:15 “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.”

Formerly “GideonsUK” we have made changes to our Association, most importantly opening our work for both men and women to join in their own right and on the same basis. We also have a new emblem showing an open Bible rather than a closed jar, to better reflect the work we undertake – placing and presenting the precious Word of God

For more information please go to goodnewsuk.com/launch-leaflet to find out more. We will also be speaking about the work in our Sunday service on 17 October.

We as **GOOD NEWS for Everyone!** representatives at SFC are very appreciative of the support in prayer and giving for the work from folk at SFC.

Terence and John



Covid Symptoms!

As previously mentioned at the last church meeting, given the changing nature of Covid19 it is important that ***if you feel unwell for any reason that you consider the potential risk to others, and join us online rather than in person.***

The Zoe Covid19 study, with over 4 million participants worldwide and led by Kings College, London has highlighted the emergence of **new symptoms** in those **who have previously been double vaccinated**. These symptoms are:

- Headache
- Runny Nose
- Sneezing
- Sore Throat
- Loss of Smell

These are somewhat different from the previous ‘traditional’ top-three symptoms, of loss of smell, shortness of breath and fever (temperature). These rank way down the list, at 5, 29 and 12 respectively. A persistent cough now ranks at number 8 if you’ve had two vaccine doses, so is no longer the top indicator of having COVID. The Zoe study in particular states “Curiously, we noticed that people who had been vaccinated and then tested positive for COVID-19 were more likely to report sneezing as a symptom compared with those without a jab. **If you’ve been vaccinated and start sneezing a lot without an explanation, you should get a COVID test**, especially if you are living or working around people who are at greater risk from the disease.”

Staplehurst Free Church Leadership Team

Terence Hawgood
Bob and Mary Howse
Clive Jones
Kate Henry

Treasurer: Roger Bashford

Staplehurst Free Church
Church Administrator - Maggie Martin

Office Tel No.: 01580 893993
www.staplehurstfreechurch.org.uk

Sunday Connections in October

Sunday 3rd	10.30am	Family Church Led by: Family Church Team <i>Theme : The Children sent away by the disciples but welcomed by Jesus - Praying for our Children</i> <i>Please book your tickets here</i> <i>Refreshments will be served after the service</i>
Sunday 10th	10.30am	Sunday Connections - Worship, Word and Communion <i>Theme: "Man shall not live by bread alone"</i> Speaker: Paul Martin <i>Please book your tickets here</i>
Sunday 17th	10.30am	Missionary Sunday <i>Theme: Good News for Everyone (formally GideonsUK)</i> Speaker: Terence Hawgood <i>Please book your tickets here</i>
Sunday 24th	10.30am	Sunday Connections - Worship, Word and Communion <i>Theme: "10 Rules to live by"</i> Speaker: Dennis Nolan <i>Please book your tickets here</i>
Sunday 31st	10.30am	Sunday Connections - Worship, Word and Family Communion <i>Theme: "The meaning of Holy"</i> Speaker: Clive Jones <i>Please book your tickets here</i>
	18:30	Churches Together in Staplehurst - service at the United Reformed Church

Enabling everyone to know Jesus
and grow in a personal relationship with Him

**STAPLEHURST
FREE CHURCH**