



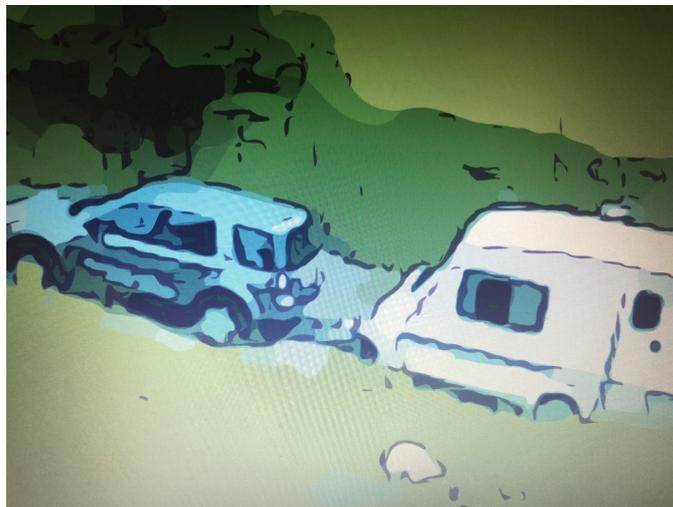
Dear Friends,

“Where does my help come from?”

Many years ago we were the proud owners of an old but solid Sprite Musketeer caravan. This was purchased after a particularly wet camping holiday in Cornwall.

With clothes dripping from the roof, muddy rivulets running through the tent (before the days of attached ground sheets) it really was time for a plan B.

So, the following Summer, with a shiny new company car and Musketeer in tow we set off for Wales, carefree and sporting our new Spring Harvest camping sticker. It was a cartoon of a stressed driver urging his car and caravan-rig up a steep hill; with the caption, “Life is an uphill struggle without Jesus”



We smiled - no stress on THIS holiday!

We hadn't got beyond Surrey, before the car was struggling to pull the caravan in anything but third gear.

The garage we pulled into explained that our car was not faulty, just under-powered to pull the weight of our 'van.

There was nothing for it, we were advised to complete our journey very slowly and consider our options on our return home.

For drivers following in the resulting tail-back, the well-intentioned sticker challenge was more than likely lost and for ourselves, aware we were painting each hill-climb with black exhaust smoke, the irony was inescapable!

Life is an uphill struggle at times, no one is exempt, and maybe that sticker wasn't the best example of an evangelical challenge after all.

If the message only gave the impression that we *don't* have struggles in life, if we know Jesus, then it was wrong - clearly!

In fact our car was providing a good object lesson.

The Christian pathway is about learning daily reliance on God. It's not an assumption that nothing will ever go wrong again. We are human and we live in an imperfect world and we will make mistakes.

'Life' will happen. It's in our struggles and through the tough times that we so often become deeply aware of God's provision and comfort. As one of our worship songs puts it; "Your great love will see me through"

In 1 Peter 5:7 (Amplified Bible) we read this: "Cast all your cares (all your anxieties, all your worries and all your concerns, once for all) on Him, for He cares for you (with deepest affection, and watches over you very carefully)"

Whether our anxieties are in the realm of flooded tents, overweight caravans or something more serious, God's promises will remain unchanged and He has promised never to leave us.

Be encouraged!

Love and blessings in Jesus, the One we trust.

Bob

Surface Deadline For inclusion in the June edition of Surface Magazine - please send all copy to Kate M via email by **Thursday 19th May**. If you no longer wish to receive this magazine, please contact the church administrator to **unsubscribe**. Many thanks!



Plans for the Jubilee Celebration and Big Jubilee Lunch on Sunday 5th June are developing well and here are the 'three Bs' for taking part and getting involved in these exciting events.

Book now! Visit the Jubilee page on the Church web site www.staplehurstfreechurch.org.uk/fcs/jubilee. Or let Corinne or Roy know.

Bring a Friend! Think about who you might bring along, it could be a neighbour, family connections or someone who might otherwise be alone when the jubilee events are going on. Printed invitations will be available very soon.

Bake biscuits and puddings! We are still awaiting the announcement of the winner and recipe of the national competition, but we are expecting to bake these puddings and also crown shaped biscuits for decorating, all for sharing and eating on the day.

Please contact Corinne and Roy for more information and to get involved.

The Jubilee events are the central part of our next Family Church series 'Born to be Queen' which will be on the first Sunday of the month in May, June and July.



Welcomers Rota - May

Sunday 1st - Adri and David
Sunday 8th - Mavis and Peter
Sunday 15th - Bob and Kate
Sunday 22th - Clive and Jo
Sunday 29th - Adri and David

Online Church

To make it easier to find us online, we have renamed our YouTube channel to Staplehurst Free Church. Please note the actual URL has not changed, so you can still find us on any links you may have already set up on your devices. Here is the new link name

[Staplehurst Free Church - YouTube](#)

Surface Magazine has been somewhat brief the last few months. We Need You!
Please submit any items for publication to



The editor Kate before the copy deadline.
Thank You!

Coffee Shop Assistance

The Shepherd's Pantry Coffee Shop is progressing well and being much appreciated by many people in our local community. If you are occasionally at a loose end on a Saturday then perhaps you would like to come along and help out. Our Barista, Charlotte, is very capable and manages perfectly well most of the time but when the Coffee Shop does get busy an extra pair of hands is very helpful. Tasks are very simple including the likes of clearing tables, loading and unloading the dishwasher or plating up food. If you would like to help out then please Contact Roy.

Thank You!

A big thank you to all the team involved in the fabulous banner and illuminations outside the church to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee and the new Family Church series 'Born to be Queen'. Unfortunately a photograph does not do it justice, so make sure you take a look if you are coming to church or pass by after dark!

THANK YOU to the wonderful team of David, Gordon, Ian and Beni for getting it sorted!



On behalf of the Leadership I would like to thank you for all the practical stuff you do, in caring for our lovely building. Also a thank you to John who is the team leader for getting the garden sorted. Bob is the Fabric Deacon and therefore responsible for the team and fulfilling our mission statement of "When it's reported, we get it sorted!"

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 May

Sunday 1st	10.30am	All Age Family Service <i>Theme: Jezebel - A Wicked Queen 1Kings 19:1-4</i> Led by: Clive and Lynne <i>Refreshments will be served after the service</i>
Sunday 8th	10:30am	Sunday Connections - Worship, Word and Communion <i>Theme: The Ultimate Judge Matthew 21:1-11</i> Led by: Clive Jones
Sunday 15th	10:30am	Sunday Connections - Worship, Word and Communion <i>Theme: The New Church Acts 2</i> Led by: Chris Tolley
Sunday 22nd	10.30am	Sunday Connections - Worship, Word and Communion <i>Theme: The Church at Ephesus</i> Speaker: Joseph Anderson
Sunday 29th	10.30am	Sunday Connections - Worship and Word <i>Theme: Missionary Sunday</i> Speaker: Alison Bentley from Compassion UK

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

**STAPLEHURST
FREE CHURCH**