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# THE LINK

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Methodist Link Churches Magazine

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April 2015 Volume 50. No. 3.

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## ***EASTER GREETINGS***

*To all our readers*



The Crosses on Brent Knoll 2014

### **PALM SUNDAY**

3.00pm Short Service on top of Brent Knoll conducted by

Rev. Simon Bale

4.00pm Service in Brent Knoll Methodist Church conducted by

Rev. Margaret Trapp

# Minister's Letter

Dear Friends,

It seems to me that April is a wonderful month of the year. As I write this letter my back garden is a sea of golden daffodils, our two trees, the elaeagnus augustifolia and the ginkgo biloba, which we put in when we came to live here, are budding nicely, and the summer bedding seedlings for the summer displays are looking exceedingly healthy. But there's more, I look forward to roses and honey suckle, agapanthus and nerines, and lots of other summer treats.

April in the garden seems like a living parable to me for Easter is normally in the month of April. Both my garden and Easter talk to me about new life now and a future full of endless promise. We Christians are Easter people, we have new life now, born again with a risen Jesus by our side, both in the good times and in the bad. But there's more, there is an eternal future too, one that has neither measure nor end. The Christian, it seems to me, is one who can both have his cake and eat it too. Jesus now everyday and Jesus forever for all eternity. Hallelujah!

God bless you all this Easter tide and in the weeks and months that lie ahead,

Yours sincerely,

Stanley.



## **Christening**

Jack Daniel Davies at Burnham 22<sup>nd</sup> March

## **Deaths**

Mr. David Lee - Funeral March 27th

Mrs. Jean Course - Funeral April 9<sup>th</sup> 11.30am Sedgemoor Crematorium and then 3.00pm at Dawlish Methodist Church.



# Calendar

## MARCH

Mon 30th 7.30am B/H Worship and Light Breakfast  
Tue. 31th 7.30am B/H Worship and Light Breakfast

## APRIL

Wed 1st 7.30am B/H Worship and Light Breakfast  
Thur 2<sup>nd</sup> 2.30pm B/H Thursday Fellowship Communion  
Thur 2nd 7.00pm B/H Maundy Thursday Communion Service  
Fri 3rd **GOOD FRIDAY**  
Fri 3rd 10.30am B/H Good Friday Service at Burnham  
Fri 3rd 7.00pm W/H Good Friday Service of Reflection and  
Meditation at West Huntspill  
Sat 4<sup>th</sup> 10.00-12.00B/H Fund Raising Coffee Morning by the  
Wednesday Group  
Sun 5th **EASTER SUNDAY**  
Sun 5th 6.30am W/H Easter Service at West Huntspill  
Sun 5th 10.30am B/H Easter All Age Service & Communion at  
Burnham  
Sun 5th 11.00amW/H Easter Service at West Huntspill  
Sun 5th 5.45pm W/H Cafe Church at West Huntspill  
Wed 8th 12.30pm B/H Church Lunch  
Tue 14th 2.30pm. E/B LINK Villages Fellowship - Paul Temple  
Missionary Outreach  
Sat 18th 10.00-12.00B/H Coffee Morning by & in aid of Biars  
Sat 18th 9.30 for 10 BR Circuit Prayer meeting at Brean  
Sun 19th 6.00pm B/H Cafe Church John Trebble  
Sun 19th **LAST DAY FOR THE MAY LINK**  
Fri 24th 10.00-12.00W/H Coffee & Chat at West Huntspill Stalls &  
Traidcraft  
Fri 24th 7.30pm B/H FUN QUIZ at Burnham Methodist  
Sat 25th 7.30pm The Burnham & Highbridge Choral  
Society's Spring concert at St Andrew's  
Burnham  
Sun 26th 3.00pm B/H Circuit Easter Offering Service Burnham  
Methodist Church  
Tue 28th 2.30pm E/B LINK Villages Fellowship - Revd Stephen  
Marr - Building Bridges

## MAY

## **MAY**

Sat 2nd 10.00-12.00 B/H Fund Raising Coffee Morning by the Choir  
Tue 12th 2.30pm E/B LINK Villages Fellowship - Tracy Grobbeler  
Local Police Work  
Wed 13th 12.30pm B/H Church Lunch  
**B/H Burnham, BR Brean, B/K Brent Knoll, E/B East Brent,  
W/H West Huntspill**



## **The Easter Offering**

The Easter Offering has a long tradition stretching back into the mid 1800's when a group of women felt called to give a special collection to the work of overseas missions. We are a part of that heritage of giving to the World Church, and while that giving may take many forms in different churches, the Easter Offering envelopes provide focal point of giving throughout the connexion. In the past this was organised by Women's Work, then Network, and now by Methodist Women in Britain, and all the money raised goes to the work of the World Church. As a gift to the connexion, MWiB also provides an Easter Offering act of worship to be used to dedicate these gifts. It is a service for the whole church, and everyone is invited to attend our Circuit dedication service at Burnham Methodist Church on Sunday April 26th at 3pm. This will be followed by tea and cake!



**Easter Offering Service**  
Burnham Methodist Church  
April 26th 2015 at 3pm.

All - men & women - old & young -  
are invited to share in this service of dedication.  
Followed by tea and cake.

# BURNHAM METHODIST CHURCH

COME AND JOIN US FOR A

## FUN QUIZ

FRIDAY 24TH APRIL

7.30pm START

RAFFLE - TABLE NIBBLES - PRIZES

PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN DRINKS (No Alcohol of course!)

All proceeds towards the purchase of an updated sound and visual system for the church and Hearing Dogs for the Deaf.

TICKETS £3.00 PER PERSON - TEAMS OF 4 MAX.

For tickets and enquiries contact - Ann Hall 01278 789001



## The Burnham & Highbridge Choral Society

with Musical Director, Nicholas Bromilow

Accompanist, Francis Webb

Present

### 700 Years of St. Andrew's Church

### in Music

with Baritone Soloist

**Amon-Ra Twilley**

on

**Saturday 25th April 2015**

at **7.30pm**

in

**St. Andrew's Church, Burnham on Sea.**

Music by Purcell • Vaughan - Williams • Elgar • Stainer • Haydn •  
Jenkins • Britten • Rutter • Lloyd - Webber

**Tickets £7.50 (£4 under 16yrs)**

Available from Material Needs, Choir members, or on the door.



## **Prayer letter from Daniel and Grace Pratt-Chapman**

### **and their little son Kwame-**

#### **Our Circuit Link in Cameroon, teaching in a theological college.**

I'm teaching New Testament (again) this year. I've mentioned before that it's not the subject I know best academically. The difficulty here is that, because the country is dominated by French speakers, until recently there were very few English universities (despite their being six million English speaking Cameroonians). Thus, until the nineties, Cameroonians had to study degrees in French- even if they didn't know anymore than Del-boy. More importantly, in France and (I believe) in its former colonies, the state does not recognize theological degrees. All these factors combined have made it very difficult to train people to be lecturers. Thus, out of necessity, we are (have been) covering an array of subjects that are not the ones we know best.

The shortage of Cameroonian theological lecturers sometimes provokes the following question: why is the theological education of pastors even necessary? Different contexts might provide different answers to this question. In the West it is sometimes argued that when people go to study theology they finish up being agnostics (Dougal, the Father Ted character, offers a good illustration of this). Whether that's true or not, it is clear that the Western context is totally different from the African.

In Europe education is free right up to secondary school. Moreover we are encouraged to question everything from an early age. Whether that be tradition, authority, dogma or anything else holding itself up as "fact." Reflection and critical thinking is integral to our formation as people. While this can make us vulnerable to scepticism it can help vaccinate us against a number of other evils.

Cameroon is quite different. Many congregations consist of subsistence farmers who have had little or no educational opportunities. Even those who do have the chance to go to school are not necessarily encouraged to question or think critically but, rather, are expected to follow received traditions and practices. In this culture, teachers, doctors and pastors are trusted - simply because of their office. Thus, even if an authority figure is completely confused people will still believe them. This is a double-edged

The LINK March 2015

sword. It means pastors who are well grounded can be real agents for social and spiritual good. However, it also means that if pastors are theologically mixed up they can have a disastrous impact.

Across Africa churches are being overrun by what Americans call the prosperity gospel. These false profits teach that the more money you give the richer you will become. Worse still these liars are telling the poorest of the poor that their sicknesses are the result of a lack of generosity (and not the inadequate health care provision here). These swindlers are taking advantage of the most disadvantaged. They have TV channels, radio stations and pamphlets promising prosperity to all. It is not only the masses that are being deceived. Young preachers, men and women, with a genuine desire to understand the bible are often only able to obtain literature propounding this prosperity gospel. Moreover there are few Christian bookshops. Even where these are present, they are flooded with pamphlets by these prosperity teachers. Hence, if you genuinely wanted to learn theology you would struggle to find edifying material. Thus, earnest individuals who want simply to learn more about the bible cannot easily get sound theological textbooks.

In this context, where false prophets abound, the shortage of theological lecturers and literature is a recipe for heretical disaster. All the denominations here are vulnerable to this deception-whether Baptist, Anglican, Methodist or Presbyterian. The situation is frightening and it cannot easily be solved. One thing, however, is clear. It is no longer enough to hand out bibles in the vernacular- it may even be irresponsible. We need desperately to ensure that pastors have the training and tools that they need to interpret the Bible (Acts 8:31).

When we read something it is all too easy to project our cultural assumptions onto the text. By this I mean quite simply that if you come from a culture where corruption is endemic, a culture in which “you don’t get anything unless you pay” then it’s easy to become convinced that God also requires some kind of financial motivation.

It’s romantic to think that, while the churches in Europe are struggling, the churches in Africa are entering a golden age. On the surface, particularly if you do not know the language, it can appear that everything is hunky dory. Churches here are, after all, full. However, just the other day I witnessed a pastor giving out certificates to church members who had donated the most money the previous Sunday. Recently I was given a book in which the author stated that “IF YOU DO NOT TITHE YOU WILL NOT

GO TO HEAVEN.” Even when I get on a bus I cannot escape - I hear an evangelist telling me to "DRINK THIS HOLY WATER" (at a cost of 5 pounds) “AND YOU WILL HAVE MANY CHILDREN.” The television doesn’t help much. Here the idiot lantern is filled with an array of channels (from across the continent), selling anything from holy handkerchiefs to anointing oil, consistently advising people that their financial problems are the result of a lack of generosity in church. The worst part about all this is that people here are poor. They cannot afford to give all their money to (419) Profits and send their children to school. Yet, more often than not, they put all they have in the collection plate in the hope that the Profits words will be fulfilled: “Give and don’t worry” he says “God will provide school fees.”

I am not saying that Europeans have the answer to these questions - or that European textbooks are the solution. Nothing could be further from the truth. Our cultural needs (and questions) are so very different. The desperation faced by theologians in the West, in their quest to be original (professors), leads them to farcical interpretations of scripture. Europe doesn’t have the answers ... but it does have resources that can help. There are many centers of theological excellence in Africa but they lack the financial investment that they need. There are many African theologians but many are forced to leave the continent because they do not have access to the resources (or the publishers) they need to promote their ideas. I am convinced that if nothing changes, if African theologians and theological institutions do not receive serious investment now, Christianity in Africa will be overtaken by this heresy.

Please pray. Pray that the Churches across the world come together to resource and invest in African Theology. Pray that those seeking scholarship for further studies will be given opportunities.

Pray for us, that we can enable the students here to think critically and pray ardently; to grow both spiritually and intellectually.

Pray that this devilish teaching, that giving money in church earns you health and wealth, is silenced and that the gospel of God’s unconditional love and grace be proclaimed.

## Café church dates at Burnham

Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> April	at 6.00 pm	John Trebble
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> May	at 6.00 pm	TBA
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> June	at 6.00 pm	TBA
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> July	at 6.00 pm	TBA



We start with a cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit or three from 5.30 pm and help ourselves to refills during the evening.

We sing a few hymns or songs, have a short talk followed by a discussion, then a few more songs, ending with the Grace at about 7.00 pm.

All are welcome to come and join us.

## Harry's Page

### **THRIVING IN THE COMBAT ZONE**

**' GOD'S SPIRIT, WHO IS IN YOU, IS GREATER THAT THE DEVIL, WHO IS IN THE WORLD' 1 John 4 : 4 NCV**

THE ATTACK from Satan. We either trivialise or exaggerate Satan's power and each spells trouble! The first makes you feel vulnerable; the second creates in you an unfounded fear. Understanding Satan's ways—and your weapons—equips you to handle his attacks and resist him. How can you do that? 1) By understanding that God effectively destroyed Satan's power through Christ's victory at the cross. He stripped the rulers and authorities of their power and made a public spectacle celebrated His victory in Christ Colossians 2:15 GWT). Satan's attempt to destroy Jesus

backfired in a glorious defeat that allows you to celebrate your victory in Christ 2) By understanding that'...God's Spirit, Who is in you, is greater than the devil, who is in the world.' No power is greater than the Spirit of God Who lives within you. If you abide in Christ Satan can't control or conquer you. Why? Because he would have to overcome Jesus to do it! 3) By understanding that, you can defeat Satan because Jesus has'.. given you authority over all the power of the enemy...(Luke 10:19 NLT). The criminal must submit to the police officer because the officer is

vested with and backed up by the full authority of the government. So when you draw on the authority God has given you in Christ Satan has no choice; he must observe the limits you

enforce against him. He can do nothing to you without your cooperation, and you don't have to give it. And Satan hopes you never discover that!



**BACK FROM THE DEAD**

READ:  
Ephesians 2:1-10

Even when we were dead . . . [God] made us alive together with Christ. — Ephesians 2:3

Can a man be officially alive after being declared legally dead? That question became international news when a man from America showed up in good health after being reported missing more than 25 years earlier. At the time of his disappearance he had been unemployed, addicted and hopelessly behind in child support payments. So he decided to go into hiding. On his return, however, he discovered how hard it is to come back from the dead. When the man went to court to reverse the ruling that had declared him legally dead, the judge turned down his request, citing a 3 year time limit for changing a death ruling.

That unusual request of a human court turns out to be a common experience for God. Paul's letter to the Ephesians tells us that though we were spiritually dead. God "made us alive together with Christ" (Eph. 2:1.5). Yet declaring and making us spiritually alive was a deeply painful matter for God. Our sin and its consequent spiritual death required the suffering death and resurrection of God's Son (vv.4-7).

It's one thing to show evidence of physical life. Our challenge is to show evidence of spiritual life. Having been declared alive in Christ, we are called to live in gratitude for the immeasurable mercy and life given to us.

Man DeHaan

*Father in heaven, our hearts are full of gratitude for the way You reached out to us when we were dead in our sins. May we live joyfully and with unending appreciation for what You did to give us life.*

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**Jesus died that we might live.**



# WEST HUNTSPILL

# Services For Easter

## Good Friday

Service of Reflection and Meditation

3<sup>rd</sup> April

7.00pm

Led by Rev. Stanley and Mrs. Joyce Pipet

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## Easter Day

Sunrise Service

5<sup>th</sup> April

6.30am

Led by Rev. Stanley Pipet

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Morning Service

11.00am

Led by Rev. Stanley Pipet

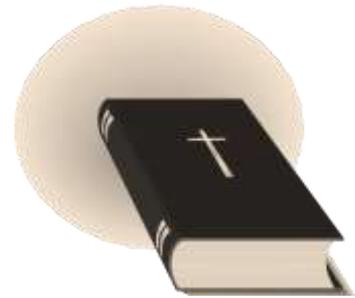
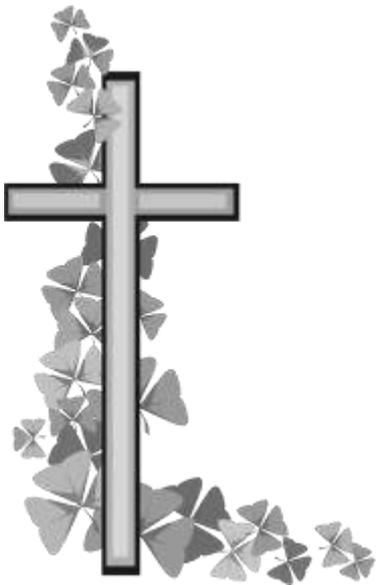
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Café Church

Afternoon tea served from 5.45pm

Service led by Rev. Stanley Pipet

You are warmly invited to join with us at any or all of these Services.



## Coffee, Cake and Chat

10.00am - 12 noon

Friday 24th April

All welcome

"FAIRTRADE" produce

Bring & Buy stall

However cold and wet it is outside you  
will be sure of warm welcome inside



# BRENT KNOLL

[www.brentknollmethodistchurch.com](http://www.brentknollmethodistchurch.com)

## Minister Revd. Margaret Trapp

I have just come back from our Mothering Sunday service and it was a real treat so see all the young people who attended. As well as being a great addition to the congregation, they also proved to be very good at distributing flowers, taking orders for tea and coffee afterwards and then helping to wash up. So a big thank you to them.

A big thank you too to all those who organised, took part in and attended the Women's World Day of Prayer held at East Brent in March. It was well attended and enjoyed by all.

And whilst on the subject of thanking East Brent, another thank you to them for organising our Link service in March, led by Michael King, and the "bring and share" lunch which followed. I'm now convinced that our Link churches include future contestants for "The Great British Bake Off" and/or "Master Chef".

At the time of writing, we are half way through our Lent course, led by our own Rev'd Margaret and Len Horlock, which has proved to be very thought provoking and has opened many a discussion between all who have attended.

One date for your diary (I know I mentioned this last month). We will be holding our Spring coffee morning a bit later than normal on Saturday 23 May from 10.30am onwards. We very much look forward to seeing you there.

All that is left to say is that, from all of us at Brent Knoll, we wish you all the joy of Easter Sunday.

God bless

Rosemary Krull



# EAST BRENT

Tradition is good but so is progress and change. These were some of the words of Michael King's sermon when he came to our recent Link Service.

As many of you will know Michael is an ex-Vice President of Methodist Conference, but his parents lived in the area and worshipped at East Brent for a number of years. We are very pleased he and his wife, Isabel, were able to visit us and maintain his own links with this part of Somerset.

As usual his words were very thought provoking and along the lines that we should be aware of our neighbours and their needs and be united with one purpose. An appropriate message for a Link Service. I particularly liked the quote that "Christ died on the cross for us, the rest is trimmings".

It was the first time we had shared lunch after a Link Service and it seemed to be enjoyed by all so this may become a new tradition. Many thanks to all who contributed food and helped to make such a delicious spread.

We, at East Brent, like to think we are open to change and in this spirit have removed some of the pews at the back of the church as a trial measure. Some say they don't like it and some say they do, but certainly where this has happened in other churches it is clear it makes a much more useable and flexible space.

At our Church Council it was suggested we try a community coffee morning as a mission outreach project. We also hope to do some form of Songs of Praise again in the summer months, so watch this space!

Rosemary Gilling



# BURNHAM

[www.methodistchurchburnhamonsea.org.uk](http://www.methodistchurchburnhamonsea.org.uk)

Isn't it interesting how a moment's thought can make you realise how precious and important things are. The other day I was sitting in a coffee shop having been to the hospital for an eye check up. Dilating drops had blurred the image of the people walking by, the letters merging together making the names of the shops confused. My phone had messages, but I couldn't read them, I had lots to do but was limited in how I could achieve these tasks, my car was waiting for me to return. Knowing in a few hours time my vision would be back to normal, I reflected on how people cope when faced with constant obstacles and challenges and how we take things for granted. That day had given me a moment of thought, to realise how lucky we are and to make the most of the things we can do. Lots of events and activities are coming up in the Circuit, let's see how much we can do to support and help with these.

Marian Kingsbury



# BREAN

[www.brean-methodist-church.home.dhs.org](http://www.brean-methodist-church.home.dhs.org)

With Easter just around the corner, we can see the signs of Spring all about us. There was a good crop of snowdrops this year and just now the daffodils look resplendent, but I've missed the crocuses. Rosemary's been in the throes of lambing for the past two or three weeks. And then there's the flourish of early season visitors that has started already. The downside is that I might have to start cutting the grass in the next few days!

We had a very successful sausage and games evening at the end of February. Our thanks to Fred and Rosemary for entertaining us with their quizzes, to all who brought games to play, and to Judy who arranged all the catering.

The LINK March 2015

We were sorry to learn of David Lee's passing. A very modest man who gave much to the church and community. He will be much missed and we send our best wishes to Barbara and his large family.

We were also sad to hear of the death of Jean Course. Jean and Roger were members at Brean for several years (and at Burnham previously) before they moved to Wellington and then retired to Dawlish in Devon. They have still been taking the Link every month and have retained their connections with the Burnham area all these years.

The first of the summer visitors have arrived already. A couple from Northamptonshire have been worshipping with us for a fortnight and soon we shall have more. It is very pleasant to share a drink with visitors after service.

Which brings us to Easter. Our congratulations to Joyce Pipet who won first prize for her Easter Biscuits at a recent competition in Burnham – Star Baker indeed.

So our best wishes to everyone for this season of the year. May it buck the trend of international news and bring joy and hope to this troubled world.

Harvey Allen



## LINK ORDER FORM

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Tel. (01278) 787378

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Tel (01278) 795764

**Brent Knoll Methodist Church**

Rev. Margaret Trapp B.A. 7 Coombe Side Brent Knoll Highbridge TA9 4ED

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**Web Sites**

New Circuit Web site [www.wsmbos.org](http://www.wsmbos.org)

[www.methodistchurchburnhamonseas.org.uk](http://www.methodistchurchburnhamonseas.org.uk)

[www.brean-methodist-church.home.dhs.org](http://www.brean-methodist-church.home.dhs.org)

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**The Deadline for the  
May 2015 "LINK" is  
Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2015**