
THE LINK

Methodist Link Churches Magazine

December 2016 – January 2017 Volume 51. No. 10

*A Joyous Christmas
and a Happy New Year*



Minister Letter

Jesus - the reason for the season

Have you seen this on cards this year? Perhaps you have sent one with this message. Sadly, as many make their way to Christmas, this will be the last thing on their mind. I have been trying to find an Advent Calendar with traditional advent pictures – do you know how hard these are to find on the high street? In December the TV screens will not be full of images of that first Christmas; rather they will concentrate on Santa Claus in a reindeer pulled sleigh, the good old favourite films, and the culmination of reality TV competitions. In homes around the country shopping will give way to over indulgence, and celebrations will change to fatigue. This year, once again, there is a real possibility of missing Christmas altogether.

Yet to miss the promise of Christmas is to miss the assurance that God is with us in a very real and personal way. The birth of Jesus, the Incarnation, brings with it a message of hope for the world. As we see the fragile human baby lying in the manger we see the most incredible and overwhelming evidence of God’s love, not only for all of creation in general, but for us in particular. This is a season of goodwill to each one of us – God’s good will.

One of the challenges of sharing this Good News with others is how we can do this through practical offerings of love rather than mere words. Is there someone you know who needs to be helped this Christmas? Is there space around your table for someone who might be alone? There is no Christmas meal at Burnham church this year, so it is up to us as individuals to do what we can for others, knowing that as we share together and serve them, we share with and serve Christ too.

Christmas says “God still cares!” It is only in the light of this sign of the blossoming and growing of God’s kingdom around us that we can start the New Year. It is knowing that we live in the reflected glory of God’s splendour, that we can start 2017 in faith and in hope, using the words of our Covenant service to gird our lives.

I would like to wish you a peaceful and fulfilling Christmas.

Steve



Calendar

NOVEMBER

| | | | |
|------|------------------|---------------|--|
| Fri | 25 th | 10.00 - 12.00 | W/H Coffee and Chat at West Huntspill see Page 9 |
| Sat | 26th | 10.00 - 12.00 | B/H Shoppers Coffee at Burnham |
| Sat | 26th | 10.30 on | B/K Christmas Coffee Morning see page |
| Sun | 27th | 6.00pm | B/H CIRCUIT SERVICE at Burnham |
| Tues | 29th | | B/H Burnham Church Council |

DECEMBER

| | | | |
|----------------|------|---------------|--|
| Thur | 1st | 7.00pm | B/H Concert with "The Friends of Burnham Hospital" |
| Sat | 3rd | 10.00 - 12.00 | B/H Fund Raising Coffee Morning |
| Sun | 4th | | B/H Family Service at Burnham |
| Tue. | 6th | 2.30pm | E/B Link Villages Fellowship - Christmas Buffet Tea - Hand Bell Ringers – (Collection) |
| Thur | 8th | 7.30pm | B & H Choral Society Christmas Concert at St. John's Highbridge |
| Sat | 10th | 10.00 - 12.00 | B/H BURNHAM CHRISTMAS FAIR |
| Sun | 11th | | Joint Link Services at Brent Knoll |
| Fri | 16th | 7.00pm | E/B East Brent Carol by Candlelight |
| Sat | 17th | 10.00 - 12.00 | B/H League of Friends Coffee Mornings at Burnham Methodist |
| Sat | 17th | 10.30am | BR Coffee and Carols at Brean |
| Sun | 18th | 6.00pm | B/H Carol Service at Burnham |
| Sat | 24th | 10.00 - 12.00 | B/H Shoppers Coffee at Burnham |
| Sat | 24th | 4.00pm | BR Carol Service at Brean |
| Fri | 30th | 10.00 - 12.00 | W/H Coffee and Chat at West Huntspill see page |
| Sat | 31st | 10.00 - 12.00 | B/H Shoppers Coffee at Burnham |
| JANUARY | | | |
| Sat | 7th | 10.00 - 12.00 | B/H Fund Raising Coffee Morning |
| Sun | 8th | | Joint Link Services at Brean |
| Tue. | 10th | 2.30pm | E/B Link Villages Fellowship - Rev. Colin Speed - By Request. |
| Fri | 13th | 7.00pm | BR Annual Sausage and Mash with games and a quiz night at BREAN see page |
| Sat | 14th | 10.00 - 12.00 | B/H Shoppers Coffee at Burnham |
| Sat | 21st | 10.00-onwards | W/H Day of Prayer for Christian Unity at West |

LINK PLAN

| | | BREAN | BRENT KNOLL | EAST BRENT | BURNHAM | WEST HUNTSPILL |
|----------|---------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| | 10.30am | McKnight HC | Bennett | Bridges | Marr HC | |
| 27th Nov | 11.00am | | | | | Dallimore |
| | 6.00pm | Circuit Service | Circuit Service | at Burnham | Circuit Service | Circuit Service |
| | 10.30am | Bennett HC | Pipet HC | Barrett | Horlock | |
| 4th Dec | 11.00am | | | | | Patient |
| | 6.00pm | | | | Bennett | |
| | 10.30am | LS @ Brent Knoll | McKnight LS | LS @ Brent Knoll | Ingrouille HC | |
| 11th Dec | 11.00am | | | | | Bennett HC |
| | 6.00pm | | | | Treble | |
| | 10.30am | Jenks | Bennett | Horlock | Thomas | |
| 18th Dec | 11.00am | | | | | J Pipet |
| | 6.00pm | | | | Bennett Carols | |
| | | | | | 11.15pm HC Bennett | |
| 24th Dec | | 4.00 Carols | | | | |
| | 10.30am | at St Bridgets 9.15 | No Service | Treble 10.00am | Bennett | |
| 25th Dec | 11.00am | | | | | Bennett 9.30 |
| | 6.00pm | | | | No Service | |
| | 10.30am | at St Bridgets | Dallimore | Thomas | Trapp | |
| 1st Jan | 11.00am | | | | | Bennett Cov |
| | 6.00pm | | | | No Service | |

Gentle as Silence

Silent Retreats at Douai Abbey, Berkshire

Friday 21 - Sunday 23 April (Cost £205)

Tuesday 13 - Sunday 18 June (Cost £450)

Organised on behalf of "reflect"

Methodist supporting retreats and spirituality.

The weekend retreat is mainly for those fairly new to silence, with several led sessions and the opportunity for a one-one time with a spiritual guide. The longer 5 night retreat is intended for those who wish to go deeper, with one led session and a one-one with a spiritual guide each day, thus leaving plenty of opportunity for encountering God in your own way.

There are local country walks, self-service meals, single bedrooms, led prayers, the opportunity to join with the Community for some of their sung Offices, the chances to "play" with arty/crafty materials, time to sit and ponder or just to be open to encounter....

For more information or a booking form or poster to put up in your church, please contact June Grunwald (from Wantage Methodist Church) 01235 760488 jnurdglaw@live.co.uk

Rev Margaret Trapp

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Greetings from Scotland to all my friends in the Link.

I've been here 10 weeks now & still unpacking boxes etc. The kitchen & bathroom are finished, so I'm no longer camping upstairs. I'm trying to get my curtains adjusted to the right lengths so they don't cover the radiators. I usually walk two mornings a week plus two whole days a month, so I'm keeping fit. It's a very friendly group that I walk with & we meet in the village at 10 am, so it's not too early, and then share cars to the start of the walk.

I'm getting to know names of people at church. Our minister has Ballachulish Church and Duror Church (8 miles away) – he takes both services (mornings only), 10 am at Duror & 11.30 am here. Both churches have about 20 in the congregation. Once a month we have a joint service, alternating at each church, so it's a bit like the Link churches. I've made a contact in my church who's connected with the Women's World Day of Prayer (they omit the word Women's in Scotland) so I may get involved with that. I've managed to re-cycle my jam-jars at Abbeyfield, where they make jam & marmalade to sell. Every Sunday afternoon there is a short service at Abbeyfield, taken by the local ministers in turn.

I still can't believe how lucky I am to be here. I keep getting side-tracked looking out of my windows at the hills & birds; I noticed a path on the hill the other side of the loch & thought it would be interesting to walk along it, only to realise that we had walked there the previous week. The views are magnificent. September was a bit damp but October was warm & sunny with fantastic sunrises & sunsets. November has been fairly autumnal although I've still worn my shorts for walking, but it's due to snow & be freezing later this week so shorts away until spring.

Since I've arrived I've realised how respected Rob is in the village – he's on most of the village committees – and his name is virtually a password for me. We had the annual firework display in the local quarry last Saturday & Rob was on the gate to take donations. David came - he'd been in Weston for their carnival on the Friday, so he'd had a long drive up & only just made it in time. It's a really good show & the surrounding villagers come to see it.

I think I'm just in time for the December Link and although it's early I wish you all a very Happy & Blessed Christmas & a Joyful & Healthy New Year; and good luck with all your projects.

Meanwhile I'll "Lift up my eyes unto the hills" (Psalm 121 is a favourite of mine) and give thanks to God for all his goodness to me.

Love to all from Hilary Malpas.

# BURNHAM METHODIST CHURCH

## Festive singing with

### “The Friends of Burnham Hospital”

Come and join us for a festive night of singing and entertainment. On Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December we are holding a musical evening at the Methodist Church in College Street. Doors will open at 6.30 for a 7.00pm start, we hope you can join us and get in the mood for Christmas.

Entry is free; however there will be a collection at the end should you wish to make a donation.

Refreshments will also be on sale in the interval.

All proceeds from the evening will be shared between the Methodist Church Roof Fund and The Friends of Burnham Hospital.

The entertainment will be provided by the U3A Concert Party. In addition your chance to see, fresh to Burnham, never heard before, a newly formed 8 piece instrumental group.

We shall finish the evening with a few carols where you can be part of the singing.

We hope you can join us to support two very worthy causes.

We are also *always* looking for donations of good quality bric-a-brac, unwanted presents, boxes of chocolates or biscuits and bottles (non Alcoholic) suitable for our ongoing raffles. You can contact Ceri to arrange a collection on 07977 191799 or 01278 323794.

If you want to see more information on The Friends of Burnham Hospital then please visit our website at [www.friendsofburnhamhospital.org.uk](http://www.friendsofburnhamhospital.org.uk) and you can ‘like us’ on Facebook.

# Christmas Concert

The Burnham & Highbridge Choral Society's popular Annual Christmas concert is on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016 at 7.30pm in St. John's Church, Highbridge. TA9 3HS.

They will be singing a selection of traditional Christmas music from composers such as Vaughan Williams, Handel, Stanford, and Holst. The choir will also be singing a carol written by one of its members.

The choir will be joined by a local brass group, who will be accompanying them this year. They will also be joined by soloist Andrew Wilson.

Why not come and enjoy some quality Christmas music.

The choir appreciate the continued support we receive from you, the audience each year.

Tickets cost £5.00, and £2.50 Children (Over 5 yrs), which are available from Material Needs (cash only please), Choir members, or may be purchased on the door.

The choir would like to take this opportunity to wish all their friends and supporters a very Happy Christmas.

The new Spring term will start on Thursday 5th January 2017 at 7.30pm in the Methodist Church hall, Burnham on Sea. New members are welcome.

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Link to Hope Shoebox Appeal.

Thank you to all those people who donated boxes full of gifts, money donations or gift donations. These came not only from Burnham Methodist Church but also from Brent Knoll and West Huntspill. Together we filled 4 family boxes and 8 Elderly Person boxes. I took these together with 6 from West Huntspill Primary School and 17 from my friends and family. These are now on their way to the Ukraine, Moldova or Serbia. Last year this charity managed to send 39,000 shoeboxes to the poor and needed in the poorest countries in Europe. If you want to find out more about this charity you can either ask me or look them on a computer at www.linktohope.co.uk. Thank you again to everyone from

Marian Foster.

WEST HUNTSPILL

Carol Service

Tuesday 20th December

Led by Revd Steve Bennett

Refreshments served

A warm welcome for everyone



Christmas Day

Breakfast served from 8.30am

9.30am Celebratory Service

Led by Rev. Steve Bennett

Bring along a gift from Santa

Coffee Mornings

Friday Dec 30th 10-12

No Table Top Sales Coffee,

Chat & Cake

Donations for Action for Children



Also

Friday 27th Jan 2017

Table Top sales as well as

Coffee, Chat & Cake

Donations to a safe house for children in South India

Day of Prayer for Christian Unity

At Methodist Church

Jan 21st from 10am

“Crossing Barriers” has been written by the Church in Germany

based on 2Corinthians 5 14-20

A detailed programme will be sent out to churches nearer the time.



BRENT KNOLL

www.brentknollmethodistchurch.com

Minister Rev. Steve Bennett

At the time of writing, it's a week until our Christmas coffee morning on Saturday 26th November at 10.30am and as always we're looking forward to a morning of getting together with our friends around the Circuit and within the village over coffee and mince pies. Although this is not a fundraiser, any donations received this year will go to the Diocese of Durgapur in Northern India. Those of us who were able to attend Burnham's "taste of India" evening earlier in the year will have heard their visiting Bishops, Bishop Probal Dutta talk to us about the amazing work the Diocese does in the area - especially dealing with the terrible problems of human trafficking amongst the young people. There is so much poverty in a vast area but their continuing dedicated work ensures that young people get an education and a place of safety in which to live. As Steve is going to India in the New Year we will give him any donations received so he may take them with him.

A huge "thank you" to all those who organised, helped and attended our "Sing for Joy" afternoon in early November. The idea for this afternoon came out of a chat between our own Carol Fisher and Jim McKnight about how they missed the choruses from our Sunday school days. Well this sowed the seeds and between them they organised the afternoon. We had a wonderful time 'revisiting' our childhood memories of our Sunday school days. Choruses (sometimes with actions) and the occasional differing words were sung with real gusto led and accompanied by Jim playing his guitar and our now very much underused church organ. Everyone enjoyed this time together. As well as our friends across the Circuit we also had some of our village friends joining us and it was a joy to see our church full. Most people stayed on to continue fellowship over a cup of tea or coffee and cakes/biscuits etc. A big thank you goes to Ronnie for printing out our programmes. It was just a shame that both he and Shirley were unable to attend - you

were both very much missed! Thank you to all those who provided delicious refreshments - especially to Christine and Janet from West Huntspill and Mary from our own church here at Brent Knoll and to those who helped with the setting up/washing up and clearing up of the hall afterwards. And of course, a huge thank you to both Carol and to Jim.

We won't be having a Christmas morning service here at Brent Knoll Methodist on Christmas day but many of us traditionally go and celebrate with East Brent. And we'll be following with tradition by having our carol service on Sunday 1st January. It's only since I've been living here in the West Country that I learnt that the 12 days of Christmas actually have the name "Twelvetide" which celebrates the twelve days of Christmas which begin on 25th December. So we'll be continuing the celebration of the Nativity on New Year's Day when Rev Margaret will be leading the service.

Well all there is to say is that from all of us here at Brent Knoll Methodist, we hope that you have a truly joyful Christmas and a peaceful and loving 2017. And In the words Charles Dickens' wonderful character Tiny Tim, "God bless, every one!".

Rosemary Krull



BRENT KNOLL METHODIST CHURCH

Christmas

Coffee and Mince Pies



Saturday November 26th 10.30am
Everyone Welcome

EAST BRENT

Thank you to all who came to our recent coffee morning. It was lovely to see and chat to so many people. We have raised in the region of £185 so far, with more to come, or so I understand.

Would you believe it but there were actually some cakes left over! They didn't go to waste (would they ever?) but were enjoyed with coffee by all who came back to the hall after the Service of Remembrance at the war memorial. A lot of local people attend this special occasion and we always offer hot drinks, in the hall, afterwards. Thanks must go, this year, to Norman for very bravely agreeing to lead the service. This is no mean feat when you have to contend with the traffic on the A370.

Our Link Service on the 20th Nov., led by Pam Pembro, was well attended and followed by, yes, you've guessed it, tea and coffee.

Yet more tea and coffee will be served, this time with mince pies, after our Carols by Candlelight on Friday 16th December at 7pm. A warm welcome to everyone.

Our new chairs have proved to be a great success as well as very comfortable. They did, however, throw up one major problem which had actually been for seen by Gordon – the candle holders were designed to fit on the end of the pews! Whoops! After a bit of head scratching, some ingenuity and hard work on Gordon's part, he has come up with a solution and there WILL be candles. Thank you Gordon.

The weather has begun to take its toll on people's health. Best wishes to all who have been suffering and we hope to see you back soon. Best wishes, also, to Diana after her recent operation.

December is very nearly upon us and by the time you are reading this we will probably already be in December so a reminder, and an invitation, to join us on Christmas Day for our traditional, short, 1/2hr, family friendly service at 10 a.m. Season's Greetings to you all from everyone here at East Brent. May we wish you all a joyous Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year

Carols by Candlelight Friday Nov 16th 7p.m.
Christmas morning, 10a.m. short, family friendly service

A warm welcome to all.



BURNHAM

www.methodistchurchburnhamonsea.org.uk

STEWARDS COLUMN.

Hi everyone,

Beautiful autumn trees gorgeous sunsets, First frosts, one giant moon, Christmas looming.

Wednesday Group.

7 of us went on a outing to the Boulevard Weston for a 1940's themed cream tea, can recommend – Blitz.

November 5th. Seafront fantastic firework display.

November 7th. Our own Carnival - best in the world.

November 7th. – 11th. Circuit holiday to Sidmouth several of the congregation went with Steve and Liz proving very popular event, plus ideal location.

November 27th 6.00pm. Sunday night Circuit service,

Choir has been busy practising for this as well as preparing for Christmas.

December 1st 7.00pm Concert by The League of Friends of, Burnham Hospital Burnham Methodist Church..

December 10th Our Christmas Fair. Lots of ideas for fundraising. Ros cooking tasty lunches, our very own Mary Berry.

December 14th Carol Singing at Abbeyfield. Put on a Christmas hat or festive jumper and join us It's a fun time sharing with others

December 18th Carol Service. Come and join us, always brightens up a dark wet evening and get us in the mood for Christmas. It was revealed our congregation is growing.

January 1st Covenant Service see details later.

Merry Christmas, Peaceful New Year.

Ann Smith.

Burnham Methodist Church

CHRISTMAS FAIR

December 10th

10.00 – 2.00

***Cakes, Raffle, Lunches, Tea & Coffee and many
other stalls,***

BREAN

www.brean-methodist-church.home.dhs.org

The Danes are said to be the happiest people in the world. It is put down to 'hygge' (pronounced something like 'hoo-gah' but with the 'oo' sound ing a bit like the letter 'u'. There is no translation for hygge . It has to be felt but the suggestion is that it is a mixture of feelings that contain simplicity, cosiness, charm, happiness, security, familiarity, comfort, reassurance, and kinship. You can have hygge by doing the simple things in the home, or in a group with friends.

As I reflected on us sitting round having coffee and chat after our joint service at East Brent last weekend, I thought 'this is our version of hygge', that in the spirit of fellowship there was something with all those qualities. The congregations from Brent Knoll, East Brent and Brean come together every month in winter for worship and fellowship, and always come away feeling better for the experience.

As we closed the doors after the Craft (and other goods) Bonanza, I guess we all felt a sense of hygge too. It was the culmination of three years' work since the last show and although the receipts were less than last time (just short of £900 this time to be shared between us and St Bridget's), the spiritual quality behind hygge at its best was well in evidence. Our thanks to all those who worked so hard and especially (let me say it) to Judy, and to Sheila from St Bridget's, who were at the core of all this activity. We were also aided by people who were not members of either church but who helped with the making of craft items and on the day itself. The refreshment area was particularly popular and bacon butties did a roaring trade. Thanks too to our Link friends who supported us on the day.

It was particularly good to see Iris Barrett again; Iris, having moved to Nailsea a few years ago has had a hard time recently. She had contributed various items to our sale and her niece had brought her down for the day.

There was a bit of relief from the other side of the world this last week. Becky Baker (Rosemary and Steve's daughter and Margaret's grand-daughter) were on holiday in New Zealand when the recent

earthquake struck. It was a frightening adventure not simply for the 'quake itself and the threat of tsunami, but also from the aftershocks and the uncertainty that it all brought. She was due to tour the South Island soon afterwards but instead was able to link up with her aunt in Sydney (Rose's sister) and spend the rest of her holiday in Australia. An experience to be shared for months to come, no doubt.

The remaining items from our Sale are being offered to Brent Knoll church and to Towans Care Home (where Sheila's husband Cedric attends twice a week). The proceeds from the Brent Knoll sale will go to Reverend Steve Bennett's Indian project in Durgapur, North East India. Our village Ecumenical Church Council also voted money to this cause when it met last month.

So November's been a bit busy and December will be also. On the 4th, after our morning united service, we shall be sharing in a Christmas lunch together. On Saturday 17th we have our Coffee and Carols event from 10.30am and on Christmas Eve we have our informal carol service at 4pm. These last two have been a very popular events in the past and many members of the Link churches have kindly supported us. So if you can, come and share with us, let us all know the joy of being together as we remember the stories of Jesus and sing our songs to his glory.

Looking into the future we have our annual Sausage and Mash with games and a quiz night on Friday January 13th at 7pm and in March after our minister's return from India we shall have an Indian meal followed by an account of Steve's experiences there. All welcome

From us all here at Brean have a hygge good Christmas and remember that Jesus is at the heart of it.

Harvey Allen

BREAN METHODIST CHURCH

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PAST SUPPORT

Please join us if you can at

Carols and Coffee – Saturday 17th December from 10.30am

Family Carol Service – Christmas Eve at 4pm

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Circuit Web site www.wsmbos.org
www.methodistchurchburnhamonsea.org.uk
www.brean-methodist-church.home.dhs.org
www.brentknollmethodistchurch.com

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| <p style="text-align: center;">The Deadline for the FEBRUARY 2017 LINK is Sunday 22nd January 2017</p> |
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LINK ORDER FORM

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Price £3.00 per annum. Inland Post **£6.00** per annum.

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