

LINK PLUS++++

December 2023 / January 2024



Dear Friends

I would like to thank everyone who has organised decorations and activities for their church and community on the run up to Christmas. This is a time when everyone is encouraged to think of those who are in need around the world and on their doorsteps. There are adverts for charities who ask the question 'Why should this happen at Christmas?'

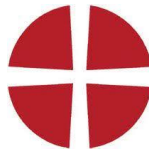
And yet for us, as followers of Jesus, the question is not linked solely to Christmas. The needs of our world might come into the consciousness of others at Christmas time, but they should be in our immediate

awareness at all times of the year. Our weekly prayers of intercession in worship encourage us to care for God's creation and God's created, and our own private prayer times should be full of the needs of others as well as the things we need.

I hope and pray that in whatever you are doing in this busy time of Advent, Christmas & New Year, you might do something for another. You never know, the 'other' of someone else's thoughts and actions might be you!

I wish you all a blessed Advent, a joyful Christmas, and a New Year full of all that God desires for you.

Steve



Brean Methodist Church

<http://www.breanmethodistchurch.org.uk>



COFFEE AND CAROLS

SATURDAY DECEMBER 16TH

From 10.30am

CAROL SERVICE

SUNDAY DECEMBER 24TH

A time of songs, readings and drama
at 4pm

Coffee and cake to follow



Well, November is over. There are many people for whom November is a depressing month and my sympathies to you if you are one of them. But it is useful therapy to look forward and the Advent of December is a springboard for what is to come. The message then is to take hold of the blessing that December offers us, and then reflect on the hope for New Year. I remember that, as Christmas receded into the distance, I used to sit on our doorstep with Judy's mum say 'Hmmm, the nights are pulling out.' . The cheer of longer days brings hope of spring and November becomes a distant memory.

It is good for us to find and foster something to look forward to. Events? Yes of course. But people too. During November we entertained a friend of ours for a few days (to give you some idea of how long, she knew Judy and shared a flat with her before I ever knew her). Her husband died just after Christmas last year after only a short illness, so she is still feeling a bit raw at times. It was good just being with her and before she went off we made sure that our next meeting was firmly in the diary. It is good to have something and someone to look forward to.

I think about that on Sunday mornings. There was a time when entry into church was a quiet and sombre affair. How much nicer, I think, to enjoy a cheery greeting and quick exchange of chat; there is still time

for a few moments' quiet anticipation before the service starts. Something to look forward to. We are among friends who look out for us as we do for them.

So, as time moves into December, and even as we recognise all the disturbances that exist around us, we at Brean, as we all do I am sure, look forward to the promises of Christmas and to the opportunities that the month gives us in meeting up and sharing food and drink with friends and families and others.

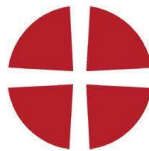
We send you our greeting at Christmas. May God go with us all in peace and wellbeing. And a happy New Year.

Please support us if you can at our regular Christmas events:

Saturday 16th December – 10.30am to 12 noon – coffee and carols;

Sunday 24th December – Carol Service, 4pm. As always a light hearted approach to the Christmas season with tea and coffee, mince pies and cake. Many of you will have had a service in the morning as well, but we hope you will be able to come to our (rather different) service also.

Harvey Allen



**Burnham, Highbridge, and Huntspills Methodist Church
Burnham**

<http://www.methodistchurchburnhamonsea.org.uk/>

In October Burnham Methodists submitted the forms and a questionnaire to see if we could be awarded a Bronze Level Eco Church Award. This had taken several months to fill in as there were eight pages of questions, but I had the able assistance of Rev. Steve, Liz Bennett and Geoff Stait, who could answers the questions I couldn't. We all learnt a lot about our church building and how we can try to

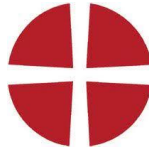
make it even more Eco friendly. We were awarded the Bronze Certificate at the end of October, and it is now on display in the church. We think that we might try to work towards the Silver award. One way we can be more Eco friendly is to use less paper. So we are trying to send less Christmas Cards. We are going to use a board at the back of the church where you can put a single card and your wishes for people in church. We did this successfully a few years ago. . It saves us buying so many cards, it saves us time writing them but more importantly it saves paper, so we use less trees. Just bring your card and put it on the board.

Our church continues to be a very busy place. The food bank is always busy and is asking for more donations. There is also a Mother and Toddler group held every Friday Morning run by church members. The Waffle Hub is busy and now also houses a Repair Shop and a Clothes Bank on Thursday Mornings. There is a Knit and Natter group that meets every Wednesday afternoon in the church from 2.00 -4.00 p.m. You don't have to be a knitter or be able to sew, you can just come for a chat and a cup of tea or coffee. All are welcome.

We are holding our Christmas Fair on December 2nd from 10.00 a.m.- 2.00 p.m. There will be a variety of stalls including a Christmas Stall and Craft Stalls as well as raffles and refreshments. I am sure you will find it interesting, so please come along.

As Christmas is fast approaching, we are thinking about the services we will be attending. We are holding a Carol Service at 6.00 pm on December 17th. A service at 11.15 pm on December 24th and a 11.00 am service on Christmas day. All are welcome. We hope you all have a lovely Christmas.

MARIAN FOSTER on behalf of the Stewards Team.



**Brent Methodist Church
East Brent**



Friday 22nd December 7pm
Carols by Candlelight followed by mince pies and coffee

Monday 25th December, Christmas Day, 10 am
Short Family Service
We look forward to seeing you.



November has been quite a busy month for us although, unfortunately, I have missed most of the services due to my fall. I received a lovely get well card from all my friends at church. It just so happened that Michael Pullen was leading worship on the Sunday when the card was written and I didn't know whether to smile or groan when I read what he had written –

“Run with perseverance” (Hebrews 12)!

Enough about that and on to more exciting news.

Rosemary Gilling worked very hard to complete our application for a bronze eco award. Not an easy task because a good number of the questions/statements were not really applicable to a small village church. However, we are very grateful to Rosemary and were thrilled when the application was automatically upgraded to Silver and obviously delighted when we were awarded Silver status.

Evelyn has been battling for some time with an organ which had a mind of its own and deigned to work sometimes but remained stubbornly silent at others. Gordon tracked down someone who was willing and able to pay us a visit and undertake a repair. It was a very tiny part which was causing the problem, that has now been repaired and the organ has had a complete overhaul. Proper Church music again.

We welcomed a number of people to our Christmas coffee morning, thank you all for your support. To date we have raised £216.

Best wishes to Jill who has also been in hospital and Ann who has an appointment pending. A speedy recovery to you both.

A quick reminder that our Carols by Candlelight are on Friday 22nd December and there will be a short family service on Christmas Day at 10 am. All are welcome to both.

Happy Christmas to you all,
Margaret

WEST HUNTSPILL

The Purple Poppy

It all started when I saw amongst all the red poppies on sale, one purple poppy in remembrance of the animals who served in wars. It reminded me of two books I have called 'Gladeye the War Horse' and 'Dogs of Courage' that tell the story of outstanding animals during war. Christine suggested having a display table in the Chapel for Remembrance Sunday and then everything fell into place. She telephoned me later and said "Pigeons". I said "Pardon"?" It was another idea for Remembrance Sunday. Thanks to Tony Baker who is a very successful breeder and racer of homing pigeons we had a live pigeon join us, amongst the tributes, for our Remembrance Service, led by Rev. Tim Widdess who spoke on the Beatitudes.

Janet Thompson.



**An Antidote to No-ember (The Friendship Book
29/10/2011)**

The harvest is gathered in, the branches are nearly bare. Are you feeling a bit dejected at the end of Summer? Don't forget – nature is already planning a revival. The wild flower seeds that fell to the ground will bloom again next year. The buds forming on bushes and trees are waiting for the kiss of the sun to open them. Bulbs are slumbering in our gardens until they awaken in the Spring. The Summer whose glories we enjoyed so much has not gone forever. It has made preparations for a wonderful repeat performance.



**Our Christmas Carol Service is on Tuesday 19th December 7.00pm
led by Rev. Steve Bennett**

**Christmas Day – Light Breakfast at 8.45am followed by a Service
at 9.30am
Led by Rev. Steve Bennett**

**Coffee and Chat Friday 29th December 10.30am – 12 Noon If you
are feeling low after Christmas is over, please come**

**Our January Coffee morning is on Friday the
26th.**

**We would like to wish all our friends in the Link A
Very Blessed and Happy Christmas and a
Peaceful 2024.**



Janet J. & Kay



THE JOY OF SHARING by Doreen J. Manning

Not Many weeks to Christmas
It's time to start preparing.
What shall we do for Christmas?
It's time for loving and caring.
Why must we wait for Christmas?
For all the joy of sharing.

Believe me, sharing is a joy,
Share what it means to you.
Tell someone of that baby boy.
And what He came to do.
Tell how he came to love and save,
Save them from Satan's snare.
He gave them power o'er death and grave.
That's what we ought to share.

So as we're approaching Christmas.
And time to start preparing.
Will you wait till Christmas?
For a time of love and caring.
Or make today like Christmas.
And know the joy of sharing.

PLUS +++
POEMS, PRAYERS,
and OTHER MESSAGES

Uphill Quiet Day

Karen Murphy has kindly agreed to lead our Quiet Day at the Retreat Centre in Uphill on the 7th December in the middle of her very demanding schedule (which includes a funeral on that day!).

We shall start promptly at 10.00 and lunch will be a little later - 1.00 and we shall perhaps finish between 3 - 3.30.

We would love to see you and you may want to take time out to prepare for all the demands this time of the year brings.

I already have received a number of bookings and, as you know, places are limited, so please let me know, as soon as you can, if you are coming and, if you are, whether you have any dietary requirements. Bookings through me on 633311 or this email address please. £10 is payable on the day.

The Centre is supported by a number of different denominations and churches outside this Circuit so we would like to encourage everyone to use the facilities we offer and not just for the programmed Quiet Days but if your church would like to run their own days.

Look forward to seeing you.

Steve Marr

The Link Fellowship

Our November meeting on November 14th saw members and friends enjoying an enjoyable outing to Wells. Christine Thomas had organised the coach that was waiting for us as we arrived at East Brent Church. Leaving at 10a.m. we were taken via the scenic route through Wedmore to Wells, where there is a coach drop off point very near to the Cathedral Green. This was much appreciated as the day was rather wet. The focus of the trip was to view the enormous hangings entitled “Threads through Creation” created by Jacqui Parkinson. Each took a different aspect of the Creation story in Genesis and were marvels of visionary creativity and amazing execution – quite breathtaking! The more one looked the more detail became apparent.

There was time for snacks in the café and a wander around the cathedral shop where, much to my amusement, a cat lay curled up in front of one of the display stands. Only when it twitched its ear could one tell it was a genuine cat – not a stuffed replica. It was oblivious to all around it – even the occasional dog who didn’t seem to notice it either.

The coach picked us up early afternoon as it had to return for the local school run, but there had been plenty of time to appreciate the outing we had shared together. Before leaving the coach thanks were expressed to our driver, and of course to Christine whose idea it had been in the first place, and had done so much to make it happen. We are back at East Brent hall on December 12th for our Christmas meeting. As it will be getting darker earlier, the suggestion was made that we should meet at 12noon for a 12.30p.m. bring and share lunch and follow this with a session of carols and Christmas readings so that we can be away before it gets too dark.

Gill Poulter is taking our January meeting on January 9th with an afternoon of pencil and paper games. We shall be back to our usual time and venue at east Brent at 2.30.p.m.

We wish you all a very happy Christmas and send our best wishes for the New year.

Joyce Pipet



**Please note the deadline for the
February Link Plus is 26th
January**

DIARY

Date & Time	Location	Event
Weekly		
Wed 10am	Zoom*	Link Bible Study
Thurs 11am	Zoom*	Link Coffee Morning
Tue/Wed & Thurs 9.00am – 5.00pm	Burnham	Waffle Hub Community Café and associated activities.
*Contact Rev Steve for zoom links		
December		
2 nd 10 – 2pm	Burnham	Christmas Fair
6 th 7.00pm	Burnham	Weston Hospice Care 'Light up a Life' Service
7 th 7.30pm	Zoom	Local Preacher's Meeting
12 th 7.30	East Brent	Circuit Meeting
16 th 10.30	Brean	Coffee & Carols
17 th 6.00pm	Burnham	Carol Service
18 th 6.00pm	Brent Knoll	Carol Service
19 th 7.00pm	West Huntspill	Carol Service
22 nd 7.00	East Brent	Carol Service
Christmas Eve		
10.30am	Brent Knoll	Sunday Service
11.00am	West Huntspill	Sunday Service

4.00pm	Brean	Informal Carol Service
11.15pm	Burnham	Christmas Midnight Communion
Christmas Day		
8.45am	West Huntspill	8.45am breakfast and Christmas Day Service at 9.30am
10.00am	East Brent	Christmas Day Service
11.00am	Burnham	Christmas Day Service
2024		
January		
7 th 10.30am	Brean	Link Covenant Service
7 th 3.30pm	Burnham	Messy Church
14 th 10.30am	Burnham	Covenant Service
18 th 7.00pm	Zoom	Circuit Property Meeting
21 st 11.00am	West Huntspill	Covenant Service