
THE LINK

Methodist Link Churches Magazine

February 2011 Volume 46. No. 1.



BREAN



BRENT KNOLL



WEST HUNTSPILL



EAST BRENT



BURNHAM ON SEA

Minister's Letter

Dear Friends

At the beginning of 2011 I would like to wish you all a HAPPY NEW YEAR.

However as I watch the TV News and read the newspapers day by day I wonder just how happy this new year will be for many, as each day there is further news of the effects of government cuts. It is hard to avoid believing that the greatest detrimental effects continue to fall on the most vulnerable members of our society – the poor, the young, the old.

While the services which many depend upon and which often provide the difference between mere existence and a reasonable quality of life are eroded and cut back, we hear that the bankers will still get their huge bonuses and hospital consultants receive overtime pay worth more than many people's total annual incomes. I find I have to ask questions about the morality of a society that likes to consider itself civilised and yet is content to allow such injustices to take place within it. Everyone should be rewarded for their hard work – but does the banker really work harder than the refuse collector or the nurse? Or do they just have different sets of skills which we apparently value very differently?

At the same time we hear of a politician being sent to jail for making dishonest claims on his expenses, and others still facing charges. What damage has this caused to the relationship of trust and respect between political leaders and electorate? Further damage is done by those who say one thing and then do quite another, especially when the actual experience of people is quite different. If "We are all in this together" why do the poor and vulnerable appear to suffer most?

I was reminded of all this as I read the following passage from Jeremiah:

“From the least to the greatest, all are greedy for gain;
prophets and priests alike, all practice deceit.
They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious.
“Peace, peace” they say, when there is no peace.
Are they ashamed of their loathsome conduct?
No, they have no shame at all;
they do not even know how to blush.
(Jeremiah 6: 13-15)

Would it not be refreshing to hear truth and see honest conduct in those whom we should be able to look up to as leaders of our nation and society?

Each one of us faces a myriad of decisions every day throughout our lives. We can choose to take the “wide”¹ path of easy acquisition and selfish ambition building our treasures on earth even if we lose our integrity along the way. Or we can choose the “narrow way” of truth and honesty and live as those whose lives are a “living sacrifice”² for Christ. Jeremiah has this piece of advice:

This is what the Lord says:
“Stand at the crossroads and look;
ask for the ancient paths,
ask where the good way is, and walk in it,
and you will find rest for your souls.
Jeremiah 6:16

I wish you a New Year of peace and rest!

Rev. Andrew.



CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

Wed. 2nd	8.00pm.	B/H	Wednesday Group - Derek Cooper (former Mayor) will tell us about finding his birth Mother.
Thur 3rd	2.30pm	B/H	Thursday Fellowship - Home Missions – Joyce Pipet (Sales table)
Sat. 5th	10.00 - 12.00.	B/H	Coffee Morning in aid of the Highbridge and Burnham Youth Project
Tue 8th	2.30pm.	E/B	LINK Villages Fellowship - Miss Evelyn Tucker - Favourite Hymns.
Wed. 9th	7.30pm.		Burnham & District Christian Aid Committee Annual Meeting - Meeting open to all.
Sat 12th	10.00 - 12.00.	B/H	Shoppers Coffee Morning All Welcome.
Thur 17th	2.30pm	B/H	Thursday Fellowship - Guest Speaker –Rev. Margaret Trapp.
Sat 19th	10.00 - 12.00.	B/H	Coffee Morning by R.N.L.I.
Sun 20th			LAST DAY for MARCH LINK
Tue 22nd	2.30pm.	E/B	LINK Villages Fellowship - Mrs A Pursey – Christian Bookshop & Cards.

¹ See Matthew 7:13

² Romans 12:1

Sat 26th	10.00 - 12.00.	B/H	Shoppers Coffee Morning All Welcome
MARCH			
Wed. 2nd	8.00pm.	B/H	Wednesday Group - Games in the Hall or cinema visit
Thur 3rd	2.30pm	B/H	Thursday Fellowship - Guest Speaker – Gerda Dixon.
Sat. 5th	10.00 - 12.00.	B/H	Coffee Morning in aid of the Highbridge and Burnham Youth Project
Tue 8th	2.30pm.	E/B	LINK Villages Fellowship - Mr John Halls – The Art of Tasting, Buying & Blending of Tea.
Sat 12th	10.00 - 12.00.	B/H	Shoppers Coffee Morning All Welcome
Wed 16th	7.30pm.		CIRCUIT MEETING at Milton
Thur 17th	2.30pm	B/H	Thursday Fellowship - Irish Quiz – Joyce Beard
Sat 19th	10.00 - 12.00.	B/H	Coffee Morning by R.N.L.I.
Sat 19th	10.00 - 3.00pm		RE-DISCOVER YOUR PURPOSE - Longwell Green United Church, Bristol - see October LINK

B/H Burnham, BR Brean, B/K Brent Knoll, E/B East Brent, W/H West Huntspill.



Birth To Mel and Elisi a daughter Patricia

Marriage Helen Verrall to Geoffrey Stait on 8th January at Burnham

Funeral Ian Halsey on December 14th at Burnham (Barbara Neville's Son in law)
Elsie Sealey on January 5th at Burnham



Thank you

Thank you so much for your kind thoughts cards and prayers which were such a help to me when in hospital.

The day before I was taken ill I said to my sons “I seem to be the only one around not having to go to hospital”

As it turned out I was the first one to go in.

You never know what is in the future, do you!

Every blessing,

Gwen Oldham.

Youth Project Coffee Mornings

Fundraising for the Highbridge and Burnham Youth Project is well underway with several churches holding fundraising events and making donations. As part of our contribution we will be running our coffee mornings on 5th February, 5th March and 2nd April in support of the project. Please let me know if you are able to help. We will need a small team for each morning. Donations of anything to sell – cakes, books, bric-a-brac etc – would also be greatly appreciated.

I hope we will all be able to support this endeavour to do God's work in our community.

Thanks in anticipation,

Julie Biggs.

CHEDDAR MALE CHOIR IN CONCERT

The Choir will open its 2011 programme on Saturday 19th. February at 7-30 p.m., when performing in St. Andrew's Church Burnham - on - Sea.

It will be directed by its new Musical Director Emma Goddard, a graduate of Bristol University and now studying for a Master's Degree in Choral Work and Conducting. The Guest Soloist is the well known and talented artiste, FRAN BOWKETT.

Tickets at £7-50 include refreshment and are available from Committee members of the Highbridge Festival, which is organising the event. This is one of a series to raise funds and make sure that the Festival can continue. For more information and tickets ring 01278 785465 or E-mail jennygolding@sky.com Tickets can also be bought at the door.

FEAR AND LOVE

READ:

Deut. 10:12-17

What does the
LORD

your God require of
you, but to fear
[Him]

... and to love Him.

-Deuteronomy 10:12

Someone shared with me her observation about two bosses.

One is loved but not feared by his subordinates. Because they love their boss but don't respect his authority, they don't follow his guidelines. The other boss is both feared and loved by those who serve under him, and their good behaviour shows it.

The Lord desires that His people both fear and love Him too. Today's that keeping God's guidelines involves both, In verse 12, we are told "to fear the LORD your God" and "to love Him."

To "fear" the Lord God is to give Him the highest respect. For the believer, it is not a matter of feeling intimidated by Him or His character. But out of respect for His person and authority, we walk in all His ways and keep His commandments. Out of "love", we serve Him with all our heart and with all our soul-rather than merely out of duty (v.12).

Love flows out of our deep gratitude for His love for us, rather than out of our likes and dislikes. "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Our fear and love for God enable us to walk willingly in obedience to God's law. --Albert Lee

Lord, You are holy and Your thoughts are much higher than mine. I bow before You. Thank You for salvation in Jesus. I love You and want to obey You with all of my heart, soul, mind, and strength. Amen.

WHY NOT Now?

READ:

John 13:33-38

David, after he
had served his own
generation ... fell
asleep. -Acts 13:36

I have a dear friend who served as a missionary in Suriname for many years, but in his final years he was stricken with an illness that paralysed him. At times he wondered why God allowed him to linger. He longed to depart and to be with his Lord.

Perhaps life is very hard for you or a loved one, and you are wondering why God has allowed you or your - loved one to linger. When Jesus said He was going to heaven, Peter asked, "Lord, why can I not follow You now?" (John

13:37). You, like Peter, may wonder why entry into heaven has been postponed: "Why not now?" God has a wise and loving purpose in leaving us behind. There is work to be done in us that can only be accomplished here on earth. Our afflictions, which are for the moment, are working for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4:17). And there is work to be done for others-if only to love and to pray. Our presence may also be for the purpose of giving others an opportunity to learn love and compassion.

So, though you may desire release for yourself or a loved one, to live on in the flesh can mean fruitfulness (Phil. 1:21). And there is comfort in waiting: Though heaven may be delayed. God has His reasons. No doubt about it! -David Roper

*Not so in haste, my heart!
Have faith in God, and wait;
Although He seems to linger long
He never comes too late. -Torrey*

**Our greatest comfort is to know
that God is in control.**



O GOD.

**Make the door of this Church
wide enough to receive all
who search for spiritual truth,
all who need human love and
Friendship;**

**Yet narrow enough to shut out
all envy, pride and strife
and strong enough to turn
back the Tempter's power.**

**O God,
make the door of this Church
the way to the saviour
and the gateway to your
eternal kingdom.**

Amen

LINK VILLAGES' FELLOWSHIP

On Tuesday, November 23rd. Rev. Christine Nelmes gave a very interesting talk on her education as a member of a Methodist Family. Relatives were Ministers and local preachers. She taught and then decided to train as an Anglican Vicar when she spent several years as vicar.

We all enjoyed our Christmas Buffet on December 14th. after which the young children from East Brent First School came to give their Christmas presentation. This took on a different aspect starting with villagers in the market selling their wares. The Children had all been well rehearsed and did very well. At the end Mrs Francesca Bowkett was thanked for bringing the children and a collection was taken for the School's Charity.

On Tuesday, January 11th. Mr Ellis Davies told us of his early life and how he had become a teacher starting in Swindon, then going to Cheshire, coming to take up the Headship of Brent Knoll School and then going to Mendip Green School in Worle. During his teaching, he taught all age groups. He also gave some anecdotes of children's stories. He played a short extract from a tape of Gervaise Phinn, a former School Inspector in Yorkshire.

Mrs Julie Draper is to give a power point demonstration on the work of St Margaret's (Somerset) Hospice on January 25th.

On Tuesday, February 8th. Miss Evelyn Tucker will tell the story of our favourite Hymns.

Mrs A. Pursey is to be our Speaker on February 22nd.

On Tuesday, March 8th Mr John Halls is to tell us of the Buying, Tasting and Blending of Tea.

We are always pleased to welcome new members on the second and fourth Tuesday afternoons of each month.

Eileen Goundry



BURNHAM.

www.methodistchurchburnhamonsea.org.uk

STEWARDS COLUMN

Well, here we are again at the start of another New Year- (did you make any new year's resolutions? – and more to the point have you kept them so far?) It hardly seems but yesterday that we were saying the same thing about 2010. And what a year it turned out to be – hot summer, the coldest winter for many years, sad times and good times.

It has been Andrew and Julie's first full year among us and already some changes in worship procedures are evident and are becoming established. I think in particular of Messy Church which seems to be increasingly popular (especially amongst the church helpers). (Please see the Messy Church report by Hilary Malpas) Although the number of children and adults who attend varies from month to month it is steadily growing and deserves our full support and encouragement.

It is no secret that our inability to heat the main body of our refurbished church is proving to be very disappointing, to say the least, but we are working on ideas to raise the necessary funds required and God willing we will solve the problem soon.

In the meantime we are again using the church hall for all services with a great deal of success – some preachers even seem to prefer the intimacy of being closer to the congregation! We did manage over Christmas – with the aid of some strategically placed electric fan heaters - to hold our children's nativity service and our candlelight carol service in the church – both of which were well attended – which was very pleasing for all involved. Hopefully as the weather improves it won't be too long before we can resume worship back in church.

Finally I want to mention the arrival of the monthly Lunch Club – another success story. Working in 5 catering groups members of the church provide meals once a month. It gives an excellent opportunity for commitment to the church as well as being a great social occasion – particularly as many diners are not members of the Methodist community.

Well, I have nattered on long enough but I must send our thoughts and prayers to all those who are not feeling well at this time, particularly those who have been or who are still in hospital. We wish you all speedy recoveries and better health in 2011.

On behalf of the Burnham Stewards I send you greetings and wish you a happy, fulfilling and contented New Year.

Barry Hall



Important Toddlers Group announcement

Help Needed at Toddlers

Paul and Sheila are unable to continue helping at Toddlers for personal reasons, and we are therefore asking for help to keep Toddlers going in the short term.

We are asking for people to come and help by making the coffee and drinks. If you can offer a couple of hours occasionally on a Friday morning to help with this please let the Stewards, Rev Andrew or Julie know as soon as possible so we can draw up a rota. If you think you may be willing to help on a longer term basis please also let us know!

Rev. Andrew.



Messy Church

Messy Church has been going now for over 6 months; the numbers attending vary from 1 or 2 families to 5 or 6 families. It is a service that runs parallel to the morning worship in the same way as the evening service runs parallel to morning worship. It's a time of worship slotted into our messy lives - hence messy church.

We always have a theme for the craft activities which is used for the short service and then we share a time of social fellowship over a tea of sandwiches and cakes, which is enjoyed by all. It's not just the children that do the craft work, the parents / adults join in with the puzzles, colouring and helping with the sticking. During the service we have action songs and prayers and all join in these.

There is also a very short talk aimed more at the adults so there is something for everyone and even the youngest children listen and respond. You may have observed our themes as we put collages up in the hall; they have been Joseph with his coloured coat and life in Egypt; Moses as a baby; Moses and the plagues; Joshua and the battle of Jericho (the children were surprised when the city walls (cardboard boxes) fell down as they blew trumpets and shouted!); Jesus, the good shepherd; Jesus the light of the world; Christmas; Epiphany. Unfortunately the last was on January 2nd, too soon after the holidays and no-one came so, instead, we held a meeting of helpers and planned the next few themes. These will be Noah; Lent; Easter; Creation; Pentecost; Bible mountains; Bible seaside's.

We would love to have members of the morning worship join us - if you can't manage the craft activities at 4.00 pm, then come for the service at 5.00 pm. and stay for tea. See you there! See you soon!

Hilary Malpas.



“Singing Children of Africa”

Many of us can still remember the visit of the choir during June and July 2008 to Burnham on Sea. So it was quite fitting that the charity chosen for the third Saturday Coffee Morning each month during 2010 was the “Singing Children of Africa” The total amount raised was £2810.00. This included £1400.00 raised at the Christmas bazaar on November 20th. Thank you to all who came along to support. Later we will hear how this money has been used.

I visited Kenya in July 2010 and so I was able to see the wooden furniture which was purchased for the kindergarten with the money raised at a special Christmas sale held in our hall on November 29th 2008

During our visit in November - December we were there for the last week of school before their Christmas holiday. The new school year began on January 4th and there would be 30 new children commencing school in the kindergarten. We were able to be involved in their prize giving ceremony. All the children work very hard. Also on the last four days before their holiday all the children in the primary school, around 400 received a free lunch. The money for this was provided through two donations. Sue arranged for Eva and I to help with these lunches which were cooked outside on wood fires. It was very rewarding to see the children's faces as

they received their meal, mainly rice, beans and maize. This was quite a task continually ladling out of the huge pots to such a long queue of children. Each one brought a dish, all of varying shape and size. I came home with two lovely letters of thanks from the children. We know how everything we do is very much appreciated by the children, parents and staff at the school..

Dorothy on behalf of Sue and The Singing Children of Africa.

The new logo is “Educate the Kids”.



Teacher

‘School is a must’ so every caring parent says. I am carefully prepared and handed over to someone I do not know. The stranger welcomes me and makes me comfortable. I cry and wonder why my parents made such a decision to leave me with a stranger.

Teacher what a marvellous person you are!

Much I do not know. But, he carefully introduces the letters of the alphabet, the vowels, two letter words, three letter words then sentences. Dear teacher you have made many succeed.

Teacher what a marvellous person you are!

It is because of you that I stand and praise. No other person can stand taller than you. You have shown many people light at the end of a dark tunnel, presidents, doctors, lawyers, engineers, pilots, name them _____. All have passed through your tender and loving care.

Teacher what a marvellous person you are!

I stand firm to praise you the more. You are a precious gift to the society. Many people do not know how great you are. Instead they despise, ridicule and insult you. They forget to know that they are what they are today because of you.

Teacher what a marvellous person you are!

This was written by and spoken by one of the girls in the primary school at the end of term concert.

BREAN

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

I looked back at my Link contribution for last February and found some very familiar subjects – managing to hold all our services even during the ice and snow, reflection on Christmas services, a note about the Christmas tree we put up outside the building, a sentence or so about people who were ill or in hospital, satisfaction that we are still trying to do different things to welcome newcomers, and looking forward to Pancake Day.

Much like this year really, though the snow and ice came in December not January. Mind you there's an astrophysicist who reckons he got the forecast right, and who says that February will also be a cold and snowy month. We shall see. At least the days are beginning to stretch out.

Our invalids are making progress, notably Walter Godwin who had a very severe time in hospital. Walter will be housebound for a while yet but it is good to know that he is improving.

We were pleased to be able to hold all of our services in December in spite of the weather, and our house fellowship and the coffee and carols on a Saturday morning were also successful.

In January we joined with other churches for a couple of services, on the first Sunday, at St Bridget's (they had to put up with my preaching though, what a shame!) and on the 16th with East Brent and Brent Knoll for a combined Covenant Service at Brent Knoll (which was just as well because after having had to spend so much on heating our church, we ran out of oil in that week).

This month we shall worship in our own church on the 6th with our Anglican friends and a small group will be looking forward to planning the joint worship in March. But there's no Pancake Day! That will have to wait until March because Easter this year is as late in April as it can be. When will the powers that be, agree to standardise Easter I wonder.

The great news is that we have two new members. Fred and Berry have come to live in the locality after having been in Cornwall for many years. For a small congregation such as ours it is a tremendous fillip to welcome new people especially those who have been members of the Methodist Church over the years.

So to continue a positive note, and better late than not at all, our best wishes to everyone for the year 2011.

Harvey Allen

BRENT KNOLL

As I write this letter the rain is pouring down and it is very dark and gloomy outside, just the sort of day to sit quietly and reflect on those things which have lifted our spirits in recent weeks.

Owing to our Church being closed for two Sundays in December due to snow and ice, we missed having our Carol service on the planned date. Many of us felt that somehow we had 'missed out' on an important part of our Christmas Celebrations, so we're delighted to hear that we would be holding it on 2nd January instead. Led by Rev Margaret, our little Church was almost full with family members spanning all ages. The shining Advent candles were ably lit by the five children in the congregation, and we all joined in singing our favourite carols. A heart-warming way to enter the New Year 2011.

For our Annual Covenant Service we were joined by our 'Link' members from East Brent and Brean, and, once again there were very few empty seats in our church. As Rev. Andrew reminds us, the Covenant Service is an important service within our Methodist Church as it allows us to reflect on our lives and relationship with God, and commit ourselves afresh to his plans and purposes. A great deal for us to ponder over. We will be uniting together again for worship in February at East Brent, and in March at Brean, and everyone is welcome to join with us.

Sadly, some of our members have been too frail or ill to come to church, and we especially remember them in our prayers. We are pleased to hear that Shirley is now at home, improving in health slowly but steadily, and we pray that both Shirley and Ron will be back with us soon as we miss them- and each and every one of our frail members, including Ted, Kathleen, and Sue and Keith's Mum, and all who are house bound at this time.

For all who may be feeling a little 'cut-off' this winter-time, a few words from the Celtic tradition.

God is with you when the way is dark and life seems cold.

God is with you when the body is weak and you feel old,

God is with you when doubts arise and fears descend,

God is with you forever, my friend. (by David Adam)

With our best wishes to all readers of the 'Link'
June Nethercot.

EAST BRENT

Once again our Church was beautifully decorated with a real 9th Christmas tree, greenery, and candles for our ‘Carols by Candlelight’ service, but the weather had different ideas. Not only was our carol service cancelled for the first time in 45 years, but also the Sunday morning service went the same way, as did Carols in the Barn.

Gordon and I walked along the road in the snow to Brean Methodist. To avoid closing their Church, Harvey Allen had agreed to take the service, we chose the carols as we went along. I’ve always found Harvey’s “sermons” very interesting as he explains the history relating to the bible readings, but on that Sunday before Christmas he excelled himself. Why was there a census? Was it just the story teller’s way of explaining how Jesus came to Bethlehem to be born, as the scriptures foretold, or did Mary and Joseph already live there. The word virgin could be translated as maiden, if you go back to the Greek as stable could be upper room, where Mary would have had no privacy so Joseph chose the quiet of the stable and so on.

A lively discussion continued over coffee afterwards, which continued over our lunch at home. A very thought provoking morning which must have been good, as I can still remember what was said!!

On Christmas morning our Church was open once more, where about thirty people met for a short half hour service with the Revd. Carol Gill.

We now look forward to the New Year with hope and anticipation, and to the first of our joint services with Brean and Brent Knoll.

The Church family at East Brent wish you all a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Jill Legg



Minister

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**The Deadline for the
March 2011“LINK” is
Sunday 20th February 2011**

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