
THE LINK

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BREAN



BRENT KNOLL



WEST HUNTSPILL



EAST BRENT



BURNHAM ON SEA

Minister's Letter

The beginning of a new year is a good time to look to the future.

I recently had a conversation about the amount of time we spend in churches trying to preserve the past – it is perhaps even more of a heavy burden for some of our Anglican colleagues who have so many ancient historical buildings to look after and preserve while also trying to make the church relevant and meet the needs of modern worship and church attendees.

Perhaps the past occupies our minds so fully because we have lived through at least part of it – we have memories and look back nostalgically to the way things used to be done. It is of course important to remember the past and to learn from the mistakes we made in it.

The future, on the other hand, is the unknown. It is a place we have yet to visit, and it may seem a scary place because there is little doubt that things will look different and be done differently there. Yet the things we do now in the present will determine to a large extent the way the future will look when we get there.

The theme of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity this year is “We will all be changed” and at the prayer day at West Huntspill we explored various means by which we are changed. I introduced the day by pointing out that we live in a world of constant change and flux – created by God in exactly that way – a world in which continents move around, climate changes (with or without help from human agency) mountains rise and fall – and creation goes on all around us.

God created a world of change and calls us to change also. I recently preached on the story of Jonah who was called by God to go to the people of Nineveh and tell them to change their ways. He disobeyed and tried to run away from God, but God did not leave him or give up on him and called him again to go to Nineveh. This time Jonah obeyed and went to take God's message. To Jonah's surprise the people heard the message and immediately repented and changed their ways! Jonah, though found this change of heart difficult to take. He got angry with God for having compassion on the people of Nineveh, and he ran away to sulk!

The first chapter of Mark tells the story of the calling of the first disciples who responded immediately to Christ's call to follow him to “Fish for people”. They demonstrated immediate obedience to God's call in contrast to Jonah's disobedience. They immediately left home, work, family to follow a stranger and an unknown and uncertain future.

The Church is changing and I believe that this is a God inspired change. Recent statistics show that there are now at least 1000 Fresh Expressions of church in the Church of England and 1000 in Methodist Churches. This means that at least 30,000 people are worshipping God in Fresh Expressions (such as Messy Church, Café Church and others) who would not be worshipping in traditional regular church services.

Graham Cray, Archbishops' Missioner and leader of the Fresh Expressions team, said,

“It's inspiring to think how much has happened in so short a time. Since the 2004 Mission-shaped Church report, we have seen the development of some 2,000 fresh expressions of church in the Church of England and Methodist Church. The Holy Spirit has been at work in reaching thousands of people through these fresh expressions and we are all running to keep up. This is hugely encouraging and is a major contribution to the re-evangelization of our land. However it is just a beginning, this is not a quick fix and there is much more to do. Fresh expressions of church are one vital factor, but there is a long haul ahead of us”.

It is clear that the Holy Spirit is moving in those Churches which have embraced the idea that we need to be offering alternative forms of worship alongside the traditional, so that we can meet the needs of many people who simply find themselves put off worshipping God in a traditional church service. It also demonstrates that there are many people looking for something more to life, who can find fulfilment through faith in Christ, if they are given the opportunity to approach him in a way that makes sense to them.

I believe that the Church needs to spend less time focussing on the past and much more time focussing on the present in order to build for a vibrant future. I believe that God is calling the church to change – just as it called the people of Nineveh to change. What is your Church doing to reach new people in new ways? What are *you* doing to support initiatives your church is taking to reach out to new people? Are you embracing change, stepping out into the unknown as the disciples did, or are you, like Jonah, sulking on the sidelines when something new is suggested?

Be a disciple of Christ – not a Jonah!

Rev Andrew

Lent Course

This year I will be leading a Lent course based on Mark's gospel based on material from the Big Bible Project (<http://bigbible.org.uk/>) making use of Tom Wright's "Mark for Lent". The sessions will take place at 2.30pm on 23rd and 29th February and 8th, 14th, 22nd and 28th March. The venue will probably be the Manse but this will depend on numbers so please let me know if you intend to come (but don't worry if you decide on the spur of the moment – just come along). Rev Andrew



Deaths

Mrs Dorothy "Joan" Pitkin on December 20th. Funeral at Burnham on January 3rd at Burnham Methodist Church followed by Cremation at Weston.



CALENDAR

JANUARY

Fri 27th 10.00 - 12.00. W/H Coffee Cake and Chat plus stalls at West Huntspill Methodist Church
Fri 27th BR Games Evening at Breaan - all invited

FEBRUARY

Wed. 1st 8.00pm. B/H Wednesday Group - Who do we think we are – A
look at how to research our family history
Thur. 2nd 2.30pm. B/H Thursday Fellowship - Mrs. Gerda Dixon.
Mon. 6th 7.00pm. Reel Issues at the Ritz
Tues 7th 7.30pm. B/H CHURCH COUNCIL if needed
Wed. 8th 12.30pm. B/H Church Lunch. ()
Wed. 8th 2.30pm. B/H Bible Study Group All welcome.
Fri. 10th 10.00 - 12.00 Coffee Morning at The Manse in aid of the Highbridge & Burnham Youth Project.
Tue. 14th 2.30pm. E/B LINK Villages Fellowship - Rev. Robin Hutt.
Thur 16th 2.30pm. B/H Thursday Fellowship - Home Missions - Joyce Pipet. (Sales table)
Sat. 18th 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Coffee Morning in aid of Educate the Kids (in Kenya)
Wed.22nd 10.30am B/H Ash Wednesday Service
Wed.22nd 2.30pm. B/H Prayer Meeting at Church. All Welcome
Thur.23rd 2.30pm. B/H LENT COURSE see LINK page 4
Fri 24th 10.00 - 12.00. W/H Coffee Cake and Chat plus stalls at West Huntspill Methodist Church

Sun 26th	6.30pm.	B/H Cafe Service
Tue. 28th	2.30pm.	E/B LINK Villages Fellowship - House of Grace in Thailand - Rev. I. Boley (Collection)
Wed.29th	2.30pm.	B/H LENT COURSE see LINK page 4
MARCH		
Thur. 1st	2.30pm.	B/H Thursday Fellowship - St. David's Day - Welsh Quiz
Fri. 2nd	1.00pm.	B/H Frugal lunch - home made soup, a roll and fruit
Fri. 2nd	2.30pm.	B/H Women's World Day of prayer service –
Burnham		Methodist
Wed. 7th	8.00pm.	B/H Wednesday Group - Lent Groups
Thur. 8th	2.30pm.	B/H LENT COURSE see LINK page 4
Sun. 11th	6.00pm.	Circuit Service: Robin Jenk's accreditation as a local preacher, at St.Andrew's Bournville
Tue. 13th	2.30pm.	E/B LINK Villages Fellowship - CHAT - Rev. Pam Pembro.
Wed.14th	12.30pm.	B/H Church Lunch. (Joyce Pipet) B/H Burnham, BR Brean, B/K Brent Knoll, E/B East Brent, W/H West Huntspill.



Youth Project Coffee Morning

The Highbridge & Burnham Youth Project has had a fantastic first term. Sarah & Steve have made many connections with young people in the area. They have been supporting various Youth Groups, running Youth Bible studies, and getting very involved at King Alfred's. They are making plans to start a Youth Alpha course in the near future.

I feel it is an immense privilege to be able to support two such dedicated and enthusiastic individuals who will no doubt go on to impact many, many lives in the future.

There has been a great response from the local churches regarding fundraising for this work, (I hope some of you were able to make it to the music marathon last week at S^t John's) but the project is ongoing which means our efforts need to be too!

As it has been some time since most of 'us Methodists' last held an event I would like to invite you to the following

'Coffee Morning at the Manse'; (see next page)

‘Coffee Morning at the Manse’

28a Caernarvon Way, B-O-S

on Friday 10th February from 10 - 12.30

in aid of the Highbridge & Burnham Youth Project.

There will be a sales table and donations of items will be gratefully received. (Items may be left on the stage at Burnham with a note and I will pick them up).

Your Generous Support will be much appreciated.

I hope to see you all soon, Julie Biggs

Churches Together are sponsoring a youth worker project.

To help with the funding, the churches in the area have been asked if they will each provide a frugal lunch during Lent.

As the Women's World day of Prayer is being held at Burnham Methodist Church on Friday March 2nd, Joyce Pipet has offered to organise a lunch consisting of home made soup, a roll and fruit. This will commence at 1pm before the service starts at 2.30pm. No tickets are needed for this, nor is there to be a set charge; but all contributions will be gratefully received towards this project.



Introducing the Foodbank Project

You may have seen Foodbanks mentioned in the press. They have had quite a bit of coverage. It is reported that this year 1million people may find themselves in need of a food parcel. That figure was provided by Trussell Trust, a charity who have helped to establish over 200 Foodbanks in the UK.

The idea behind the project is quite simple. It aims to help those in emergency situations, who will not be able to afford to eat. This might be because of a benefits delay, or an unexpected large bill at an inopportune time. Whatever the reason, Foodbank seeks to supply each member of the household facing the emergency with enough food to last 3 days - 10 square meals each. Clients are referred by a recognised agency, e.g. Citizens Advice, School, GP, Housing Association.

We have recently established a management group and together we are working towards establishing a fully functioning Foodbank with all referral agencies on board by early summer. However we are very conscious that the need is now and hope to have a smaller scale initial project running out of Hope Baptist Church in Highbridge as early as this Easter. The church already hosts a number of referring agencies on a Thursday morning. To make this happen we shall be collecting offers of food during Lent at schools and churches in our area. Please consider bringing perhaps just one item off the list if you can maybe each week (ensuring all items are well in date)

Please pray that God will guide us in this venture and that if it is truly of Him he will make our paths straight.

Milk (UHT or powdered)
Sugar (500g)
Fruit juice (carton)
Soup
Pasta sauces
Sponge pudding (tinned)
Tomatoes (tinned)
Cereals

Rice pudding (tinned)
Tea Bags/instant coffee
Instant mash potato
Rice/pasta
Tinned meat/fish
Tinned fruit
Jam
Biscuits or snack bars

Grace and Peace.

Rev Sharon Crossman (St John's Highbridge)

Rev Andrew Jackson (Hope Baptist, Highbridge)

And the management team

TAUNTON ENTERTAINERS IN CONCERT

at Burnham on Sea Methodist Church

On Friday March 30th

At 7.30pm.

Tickets £6.00 including refreshments

In aid of the New Church Heating

Doors open at 7.0pm.

Reel Issues
at the Ritz Cinema
Burnham on Sea
Monday 6th February at 7pm
In Time (2011) 12

Set in an alternative world in which time really IS money, Justin Timberlake is bequeathed a century of time and decides to use it to 'bring down the system' embarking on a Bonnie and Clyde-style crime spree and giving every minute to the poor.

**Film and optional discussion afterwards
Adults - £5, Under 15s & Concessions - £4**

Reel Issues is promoted by the local churches in Burnham and Highbridge



Action for Children

On behalf of Action for Children I would like to thank everyone for the support during the Christmas period.

The amounts raised were:-

Coffee Morning in November:- £157.40

Christmas Carol Singing at Tesco, Tudor Lodge & Beaufort House:-
£165.04

Christmas Services - Christmas Eve Nativity, Midnight Communion and Retiring Collection Christmas Day :- £213.04

I am now emptying the Home Collecting Boxes. If you would like to have a box in your home please see me. I empty them each January. During the year it is a good way to put in your small change. Every little helps.

Many thanks,

Dorothy May.



Educate the Kids (In Kenya)

During 2012 the Charity Coffee Mornings on the 3rd Saturday of each month are for Educate the Kids. There are several stalls, a time of fellowship and friendship over a cup of Coffee or Tea. Also a chance to see pictures and learn more about the children we are helping.

The January Coffee Morning raised £191.00

We look forward to welcoming you there,

Dorothy May.



Harry's Page (from his daily Bible readings)

**DON'T
LAUGH
IT OFF**

READ:

Luke 6:27-36

Love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return.

--Luke 6:35

Driving a huge lorry over icy roads would seem to be a task that requires a sense of humour. However, when one driver heard another driver named Alex laugh often and rather loudly over the radio system, he grew irritated. So he made some disparaging remarks about Alex and his good natured guffaws.

Not long after that, the critical driver lost control of his vehicle and ended up in a ditch--up to his axles in snow. Guess who came along the isolated road and saw his predicament?

That's right. Alex,

So, what would you do? Keep on driving right past with a hearty laugh at the other man's trouble?

That's not what Alex did. He stopped and spent several hours helping dig his critic out. When he was done, he simply said, "Any opportunity I can have to make amends, I'm happy to do it." Then, of course, he laughed.

What a lesson for all of us. Isn't that what Christ commanded us to do in Luke 6--to help out even those who seem to be our enemies? The next time someone says something about you that you don't like, think of Alex—and don't just laugh it off. Do something positive for that person, and in so doing, you may make a friend. --Dave Branon

Doing good to those who hate us,
Lord, is difficult to do;
Help us by Your grace to love them,
Praying they will turn to You. --Sper

A good example is the best sermon.

BIRTHDAY GIVEAWAY

READ:

1 Chronicles 29:1-14

God loves a cheerful giver,
--2 Corinthians 9:7

When I reminded my husband that his 39th birthday was just around the corner, he declared that he didn't want any presents. *Yeah, right*, I thought, and I continued to press him for gift ideas. That's when he told me he wanted to give away the money we would have spent on his birthday.

The Bible calls us to give willingly--not grudgingly or of necessity--to support God's work and to help people (2 Cor. 9:7). This kind of freewill giving often results in joy for the giver. When King David donated his personal stash of gold and silver to help build the temple,

many Israelite officials followed his example. After they contributed bronze, iron, gem stones, and precious metal, "the people rejoiced, for they had offered willingly" (1 Chron. 29:9).

As part of the celebration, David praised God, saying, "Of Your own we have given You" (v.14). His point was that God owns everything. Remembering this allows us to give eagerly, because we are just returning our resources to their rightful owner--God Himself.

The next time you contribute cash, services, or belongings to support the cause of Christ, examine your attitude. Are you giving freely and willingly? God loves a cheerful giver.

--Jennifer Benson Schuldt

Lord, You love the cheerful giver,
Who with open heart and hand
Blesses freely, as a river
That refreshes all the land. --Murray

**How we give is more important than
how much we give.**

LINK VILLAGES' FELLOWSHIP

Members enjoyed a delicious Buffet Lunch for our last meeting of 2011 after which the children from East Brent First School came to present their Nativity play. Although some of these children are only four years old, it was a lovely performance. They were helped with musical instruments by a few of year 2 children. Thanks were expressed to Mrs. Francesca Bowkett and other staff and parents.

We were pleased to welcome Paul Temple to our first meeting of 2012 when he gave us an update on the work in Luhimba in Tanzania. He spent about half of last year out there with interested people from this area who helped with building and teaching. The Care Home for the elderly is now completed. A Bank has been built recently and the villagers can now use it to bank their earnings. At the close of the meeting a collection was taken. Paul went out again on January 12th.

On January 24th. Mr and Mrs Endall will tell us of their experiences when they took part in a TV programme "To Buy or Not To Buy"

We look forward to hearing Rev. Robin Hutt on February 14th.

Rev. I. Boley will tell us of the "House of Grace in Thailand on February 28th.

On Tuesday March 13th. Rev. Pam Pembro will give an update on the CHAT project in Weston-super-Mare.

We have been very pleased to welcome four new members recently. We shall be pleased to see anyone who would like to join us for an afternoon of fellowship on the second and fourth Tuesday afternoons of each month at East Brent Methodist Church.

Eileen Goundry.



BURNHAM.

www.methodistchurchburnhamonsea.org.uk

STEWARDS COLUMN

(Received 11th January 2012 Editor)

Wishing everyone a very happy New Year with the hope that everyone had a very good Christmas and hope the New Year will bring peace, health and happiness to you all.

Here at Burnham on 1st January we had our second Local Arrangement service lead by the Stewards! This was the second time we had done this but it does not seem to get any easier (at least I didn't think so!) The feedback we received was very positive which we were pleased about.

On Tuesday 3rd January we paid tribute for the life of Dorothy Joan Pitkin who died on 20th December aged 94 years. We pray for her family and friends and hope they will find peace and comfort in the Lord.

On Sunday 15th January we look forward to hearing Julie Biggs preaching for the first time and wish her blessings as she starts on her new road.

Looking at the garden it does not seem to know what season it is as it has been so mild this winter that even the bulbs are trying to push through, I even have buds on some of my rose bushes but if the forecast is right they may regret showing their delicate heads so soon.

There are some of our congregation that we know are unwell and we pray that God's healing spirit will visit them and make them whole again. We keep those known to us in our prayers.

Hope this finds our friends in the Link healthy and happy and ready to begin another year in the work of our church.

With love and blessings from the Stewards and congregation of Burnham Church.

June (on behalf of the Stewards)

STEWARDS COLUMN

(Received 23rd January 2012)

Well – there I was – looking forward to a Saturday afternoon watching snooker on the telly – when Ann reminded me (quite casually of course) that it was my turn to write the stewards column. Ah well - such is life! So here I am!

Hope you all had a good Christmas and New Year – seems ages ago doesn't it?

Hasn't the weather been kind to us this year after all the snow and ice of last year? Although so far we have had a relatively mild winter – It has become more than obvious that heating in the church must now be a priority. Having hired and used a large heater over the Christmas period it has been decided that it would probably pay us to purchase such a heater for continued use for the time being. This is now being looked into – so watch this space!

Services over the Christmas period seem to have been enjoyed by all who attended and helped to remind us of the real message of Christmas. Long may it continue?

So now we are well into the New Year with expectation and some trepidation there are many decisions to be discussed and made in the near future and with God's guidance we will follow the correct path for the church and our community. We know that, in addition, with the companionship, fellowship and friendship amongst church members the coming year will hold no fears for us.

We send our thoughts, prayers and best wishes to all who cannot worship in church at this time due to illness and hope for speedy recoveries.

We also hope that 2012 will bring fulfilment and peace to all in the Link.

Barry Hall.



Visit to Kenya 17th Nov – 7th Dec.

On November 17th a group of 12 left Heathrow bound for Mombasa changing planes in Nairobi. We soon noticed the different temperature from England but also that there had been heavy rain. On a journey to school the taxi taking us had difficulty in one part where the deep water was right across the track. However the weather was good all the time we were there and we did not need to wear a coat. We needed to travel by taxi to take several cases across to the school containing uniforms and many other items. We had six of the staff of the Haven Holiday Village from Exmouth with us. During the year they have raised money for the children. Some of this money had been spent on equipment which had been purchased at the nearby supermarket such as Skipping Ropes, Balls, Bats, and Hoops and all these items were soon in use.

On Tuesday afternoon after school 14 children from the kindergarten came by taxi to our hotel. These children were all sponsored by members of our group. We had swimming costumes and trunks ready so soon all of them were enjoying time in the pool with us. After this they were taken into a large room in our hotel for a lovely tea. It was wonderful to watch these children aged 5 to 7 eating up all the food. After this Sue and I went with them in the taxi back to school for 6.30 pm. when all their parents were to meet them. They were all very happy after their treat.

The next morning some of our group set off early to go to the market to buy food using money raised and donated during the year. We were to give each family in the school a food parcel on the Friday after prize giving on the last day of the school year. Buying the food and then weighing it into the various amounts was a mammoth task.

Around 350 parcels were made consisting of sugar, rice, beans, maize, flour and tea. Cooking oil was measured into a plastic bag from large drums. So on Friday we were at the primary school for 8.30am. where the chairs were arranged. Soon all the children and teachers from the kindergartner arrived. We were entertained by the children, some singing and some reciting poetry. After this came the prize giving and we were involved giving out the prizes, three per class. After this the school was closed. Following this all the parents were invited into the school grounds to receive their food parcels. They were all very appreciative.

On Saturday I was able to visit Omar's home to meet his wife and daughter Sauda who was born in July 2011. Omar spent four weeks in our home in June and July 2008 when the choir visited the UK. Sauda is gorgeous and seems so much older than four months. I had my lunch there with Omar before he walked back through the village to the hotel with me.

Our second week started early Monday morning when we arrived at the kindergarten. Parents had been invited to the school if they had children of four years to register their child. We had six tables with two of us arranged with the necessary questionnaires. As most of the parents do not speak English we needed a translator. It is quite a sight to see so many parents and children waiting outside. They had to bring a birth certificate and these are checked before letting the parent in. We were kept busy over 2 hours sitting out in the heat trying to keep in some shade. The forms are then checked and around 40 families were listed and were to be at school on Tuesday. These were then sorted into areas and we set off in groups to visit homes. This involved quite a lot of walking and then seeing the living conditions of these families, just what little they have. Following this on Wednesday the successful children's names were listed on the school gate and those children were brought along to the school on that morning. Fortunately we had sponsors for most of these children.

Our time spent at the school for this trip was all over but six of us were flying on Friday to Tanzania to stay in Zanzibar while the remainder of the group were returning to the UK. We flew from Mombasa to Zanzibar in a small plane taking just half an hour. We then had an hour's drive to our hotel for the next five days. Here we were able to relax in wonderful grounds swim or for me paddle in the Indian Ocean or one of the pools. Truly a wonderful, luxurious, experience. On Tuesday, the 6th December we were packed and ready for a return flight to Nairobi and then on to Heathrow and finally arriving in Burnham around 11.00am. on the 7th December.

We were soon into our final preparations for Christmas but still remembering how we had helped so many families. Once more a very memorable trip.

Dorothy May.



BREAN

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

I remember that my mother-in-law and I used to have a ritual every year, three days or so after Christmas when at dusk, we would look up at the sky and in terms of mock wisdom say to each other “h'mm, days are getting longer.”

Now it's already a month later and it's even getting to be a little bit light when I wake up. Christmas seems so far away.

Apart from our Carol Service, we only worshipped in our own church once over the Christmas/New Year period. On Christmas Day and on the first Sunday of January we joined with our Anglican friends at St Bridget's and on the 15th we shared the Covenant Service at East Brent. It is good to meet with others in worship and that we have enjoyed. On February 19th we welcome East Brent and Brent Knoll to our church.

We entertained thirty people from the village and Link at our coffee and carols morning and forty people at our Christmas Eve carol service. At the latter we raised nearly £90 for Action for Children. Thank you to everyone from across the Link who has taken the trouble to support us in these ventures. It is much appreciated.

Kath Hopkins has had a fall recently and is in Burnham hospital. We wish her well for a quick recovery. Marjorie Godwin, who moved to Berrow a few years ago, is now worshipping at St Mary's because it is so much closer and she doesn't drive a lot; we wish you well Marjorie and remember you in our prayers.

This month we enter the period of Lent and plan to hold a pancake evening on Shrove Tuesday. A study group for Lent will be formed I am sure.

Brean is very quiet at the moment, and in chapel we struggle sometimes to get to double figures. But my eye caught a plea in the Observer a couple of weeks ago. The correspondent asked the paper's agony aunt whether she ought to think of going to church even though she didn't believe in God. She was having a really tough time at home. The agony aunt replied saying that she was tilted to atheism herself, but recognised that all that singing and such in worship has got to help. “Who'd have thought” she said, “that in an increasingly secular society,

we'd need God's house more than ever?" She went on "the church is far more appealing in a crisis than social services not least because you don't need to go through a complex automated phone service" And then there was the crux of it all "embracing religion is one of the few guaranteed ways of joining a real-life community."

H'mm, let us pray that our doors of welcome will step up to the mark whenever such need arises.

Harvey Allen



Weddings as they used to be

BREAN: The church of St Bridget was, on Wednesday, the scene of a wedding which excited an unusual degree of interest, the parties, who were the centre of interest, being Mr Maurice Robert Champion, of Northam Farm, Berrow second son of the late Mr E. Champion, Brean Down, and Miss Gladys Hicks, eldest daughter of Mr H. M. Hicks, Southfield Farm Brean, and who has rendered considerable service to the Wesleyan Chapel for many years as organist and teacher in the Sunday School. The service was fully choral, Miss E. Harris presiding at the organ, whilst the hymns included "The voice that breathed o'er Eden" and "How welcome was the call". The Rev. T. W. Strong (rector) officiated. The bride was given away by her father, and was attended by Miss Blanche Muriel Hicks, sister of the bride, and the Misses Annie Harris and Mary Hawkings, nieces of the bridegroom. Mr F.W. Champion acted as best man.

The bride was handsomely attired in an ivory mousseline satin dress, trimmed with piece lace and fringe, and wore a hat with long ostrich feather, finished with a single rose, with lace fallings at the back, and she carried a shower bouquet of tulips, lilies of the valley, and lilies etc., the gift of the bridegroom. The bride's sister was attired in a soft pale blue satin, trimmed with lace and black velvet, and wore a black hat trimmed with ribbon velvet and lined with pale blue ninon and rose to match, and carried a bouquet of pink carnations. She also wore a gold bracelet which together with her bouquet, were the gifts of the bridegroom. The younger bridesmaids wore white silk dresses piped with pale blue satin and white hats trimmed with forget-me-nots and streamers of blue ribbon at the side, and they carried bouquets of pink carnations and wore gold brooches, the gift of the bridegroom.

The wedding breakfast was held at Southfield Farm, the home of the bride, after which the happy couple left amid showers of good wishes and confetti for London, where the honeymoon is being spent. Their future home will be St. George's Farm, Worle.

Merry peals were rung during the day in honour of the event. The presents, which numbered over one hundred, were both handsome and useful, and included presentations from the ministers and preachers of the Weston-super-mare Circuit and Sunday School. The former took the form of a handsome inlaid eight day clock, which bore the inscription:- "Presented to Miss Gladys Hicks, on her marriage, by the ministers and preachers of the Weston-super-Mare Circuit, in appreciation of her devoted services as organist at Brean Wesleyan Church, 1913"



WEST HUNTSPELL

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity prayer day, held at West Huntspill Methodist Church on Saturday January 21st.

Every year the ecumenical prayer group based in West Huntspill organises a day of prayer during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, based on the international theme for that year.

This year the theme was "We shall all be changed", and was produced by the churches in Poland.

After opening devotions and introduction, there was a series of half hour sessions, each based on a different aspect of "change". People were free to come and go as they wished, and there was opportunity to share in fellowship over mid morning coffee, lunch and afternoon tea.

Each session was led by a different person, so, as well as the changes in focus, there were changes in style and presentation. Perhaps the most notable was when two Friends from the Quaker Meeting House invited us to use their half hour in the manner in which a Quaker meeting would proceed. This took the form of a time of silence to contemplate the theme, followed by a time when if anyone felt moved to share their thoughts, there was opportunity to do so - though it was made clear that it was equally acceptable if no one spoke, - and concluding with a second period of silence, ending when our two Friends shook hands, and invited us to do the same with those around us.

Our themes were:- Changed by:- 1. Waiting; 2. Serving; 3. Suffering; 4. Struggling; 5. Peacemaking; 6. Loving; and & 7. Feeding.

As we prepared for each session, a few significant objects were placed in a central display area to help us with visual images.

Our day culminated as we shared Holy Communion together.

It was good to see so many people from a number of churches and denominations come and spend time in sharing in prayer and contemplation during the day; and the work that the people from West Huntspill had put into preparing the day was greatly appreciated by all who attended.

A Visitors Christmas

Taste the difference.' doesn't only apply to a brand of products at a well known super-market. It was the experience offered by the congregation at West Huntspill on Christmas morning.

Entering the church you were not only offered a welcoming Happy Christmas, but a warming drink. The sanctuary, bright and cheerful as expected, but no rows of seats - little groups of chairs around festively decorated tables and a plate of biscuits on it.



With a word of introduction we entered an act of worship with a difference. We sang carols, heartfelt prayers were offered and the Christmas reading from Luke presented. But oh! what joy. no sermon but a story teller opening up the Christmas story through a

modern parable of Michael Mouse.

As listeners we were encouraged to think again about the great gift from God, encouraged to participate in the story using puppets on our tables depicting characters in the story. We heard of the bringing of gifts to the new born babe. But also the rejection of the main character and the derision by the gift bringers because he had no gift to bring. In the final scene of the story we heard.....why don't you ask one of those who were there what we heard?

The story brought home the fact that Christmas is not only a time of giving and receiving costly gifts, but a time to realise that God's gift demands that we give ourselves to advance the knowledge of His great love to all creation.

Thank you West Huntspill for a wonderful uplifting, interactive and different time of worship. And a true birth day celebration complete with a cake.

"What shall I bring him, poor that I am - bring my(self) heart."



BRENT KNOLL

At the time of writing, the weather is simply beautiful. After the gales and rain of December, the New Year has certainly come in with a whimper rather than a roar. The sunsets and rises with their deep red warmth have been a pleasure to watch.

When I wrote last for The Link, I talked about the simple things in life. What I didn't know then, back in October, was that Brent Knoll would lose a member of their congregation. And I would lose my beloved mother. The last two months have been the saddest of my life. To have moved to the beautiful County of Somerset to give my mother, Irene Krull, a better life, only to lose her after only fifteen months, has been the most painful of experiences. The grief has been, simply, insurmountable. However, once again, the service at Weston Crematorium and the thanksgiving service at Brent Knoll were wonderful and proved once again that fellowship is an incalculable blessing. I thank everybody from Brent Knoll who attended the service, who telephoned, who sent cards - and especially to Andrew, our minister, Margaret Trapp and Carol Fisher for being there at the hospital offering prayers, blessings and support.

Lent begins in this wonderful month of February. Statistically, February is one of the most depressing months of the year as people still calculate their Christmas spending, the weather is traditionally dreadful and Spring still seems a long way off. As Christians we are very lucky. It's our time to begin anew. To have forty days of reflection as we think of our Lord. And at the end of this period we have a celebration which is

more wonderful than anything Christmas meant to us as children. I wish you blessings this Lenten period. Whether you decide to give up something, take up something or simply spend time in reflection.

5th February: Rev. Andrew Biggs: Communion.

12th February: Mr. Peter Richardson.

19th February: Mr. Brian Dallimore. **A United Link Service at
Brean Methodist Church.**

26th February: Mr. Chris Luker.



EAST BRENT

It seems ages since the last “Link” therefore some of the news from East Brent is about 2 months old.

At the beginning of December we held the Christening of Sonny the great nephew of Jill & Gordon. There was a large congregation quite a lot of family but it was lovely to see a full Church for morning worship.

The next celebration was the Carol Service. The Church as usual was beautifully decorated – mostly by Jill & Gordon – and with its Christmas greenery and in the candlelight it created a lovely atmosphere.

There was a good gathering for this service and we are grateful to the several people who read either a poem or lessons.

Everyone enjoyed singing the old familiar carols and then most people resorted to the Hall for Coffee and mince pies – thanks again go to the mince pie makers and the coffee makers

Our Christmas morning service was taken by Rev. Margaret Trapp and although not quite so many people attended as usual it was still a delight on that happy morning to hear the East Brent Church bells ringing.

Our collections from these two services amounted to £300.00 which was given away, to The Luhimba appeal £150.00 and to Mr. & Mrs. Parry’s appeal for a school in Kenya £150.00.

On the next Sunday January 1st we decided to close our church and join with Brent Knoll. We had a carol service devised by the Brent Knoll friends and we enjoyed being together in fellowship.

Personally it was a change to sit in the congregation and not have to think what carol comes next!!

January 15th brought us to our joint monthly winter services at East Brent

We used “Singing the Faith” for the first time. It was our first attempt at new hymns. We sang two which were unknown and we all managed to finish together which was an achievement on my part at least. Conducted by Rev. Biggs this was our Annual Covenant Service.

It was a very good service but not as many congregation as one would have hoped at the most important service for “People called Methodists”

There was only one problem – the organ decided to withdraw its service as the first note was struck for the last hymn nothing daunted the congregation carried on singing and from my point of view did a sterling job without me – Perhaps I was surplus to requirements.

After the service we were able to wish Joan Hicks a Happy 90th birthday for 16th January as we partook of Coffee & Biscuit and had a general chat until we meet at Brean for the next months combined service.

We are also pleased to welcome Bob into our Church family and Margaret when she is able.

It’s a delight to have regulars join us on a Sunday morning and finally although rather belated may the Church family at East Brent wish you a Happy, peaceful and prosperous New Year.

Evelyn M. J. Tucker.

Minister

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**The Deadline for the
March 2012 “LINK” is
Sunday 19th February 2012**

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