

LINK PLUS++++

February 2023



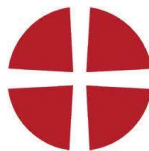
Dear Friends

When I was a young man (yes, I know it is hard to think back that far) I thought that in 2023 I would be retired, flying around the world, and generally having a well earned rest. Those were the days when I had deliberately set up my retirement plans with my employer to retire at age 60, irrespective of any other possible financial gain from working to age 65. How different life turns out to be from what was expected. Instead, in the year I will be 63, I find myself still working – but now called and deployed by God.

This was definitely not in my plan years ago, but it was in God's. In reality, I realised that when I responded to the call to ministry this would be the case. My desires for my 60's would need to take second place to the plan that God had laid out for me. I realise that I am doing now what God has prepared me for throughout my life, from experiencing the example of the loving caring folk in the churches of my youth, from being encouraged to preach in my teens, from leading business meetings, through the harsh realities of financial advice and guidance – even having to say 'No' when you really want to say 'Yes'!

Why do I bring such a personal confession this to the Link Plus you might ask. Well, I don't think that where we now are as a church in 2023 is where we thought, or even hoped, we might be years ago. We might feel ourselves ill-prepared or ill-equipped to meet the challenges of the reality we all face today. We might prefer to think of ourselves retired from roles we have held for so long....but we too are called and deployed by God into this time and place. We are called to work out what these changing circumstances mean to the way in which we 'preach the good news' through word and action. We are adopted as God's children, to live as church in this generation. Although 2023 will be a testing year for us all, rejoice and be glad, for we have been equipped and prepared by God to face even these challenges.

Steve



Brean Methodist Church

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

So, do you like bacon? Well, who doesn't? But when Judy has bacon she invariably adds a spoonful of orange marmalade on the side. I've always had a bit of a laugh; it doesn't seem right somehow to add so much sweetness to a savoury dish.

The thought of that occurred to me again, after we had tucked into our sausage and mash at our Beetle Drive at the end of January. A selection of 7 or 8 flavours of sausages from Pynes the butchers spread before us flavoured from traditional to black pudding and leek and apple; even venison. I tried about 4 of them and paradoxically the one I liked most was Pork and Marmalade. It made an excellent combination and I rather think I am going to have to try marmalade with my bacon next time!

A happy evening it was. Sausage, mash, fried onions, baked beans, what could be better on a Saturday evening in great company; and then fresh fruit and various chocolate to finish off. After all that, Ann led us through our Beetle Drive which Stanley won quite convincingly. Even better. we were greatly pleased to welcome a couple of Ukrainian refugees to our feast. They were brought by Jeremy one of our Anglican friends. Our thanks to all those who contributed to the success of the evening, in particular to Judy who took charge of most of the catering, and to Anne and Rose who organised the Beetle drive. We were a bit fewer in numbers this year with, for example, Celia and Jimmy both under the weather with Covid; and Kathy and Roger both suffering from injuries received from a bus crash in Weston; and others at family birthday events, and so on. But, even so, it was a very happy occasion with plenty of chatter and mixing around.

We wish all those who are suffering from Covid and other illnesses, speedy recoveries. And our special concerns for the walking wounded who were on that bus into which a van crashed this week, Roger with a badly sprained ankle and Kathy with one leg broken and the other badly gashed along the length of a bone. Our thoughts are with them and wishes for a speedy return to full health.

It seems a while since Christmas and we hope that you all enjoyed your own festivities. Over the last few years we have stopped sending Christmas cards to each other in the church and instead have made a collective donation to All we Can; this year we raised a record £100 which meant we could nominate our offering to provide plumbing and

toilet facilities for a needy community in Africa. Then the collection during the carol service raised an incredible £215 which was sent to Action for Children; an amazing result, thank you to everyone. And very humbling that people should be so generous.

The wider Christmas observations went well too, the joint December service with our Anglican friends with lunch afterwards, the Coffee and Carols event a week before the big day and our Carol Service on Christmas Eve to which just over forty people came.

Judy and I tried to get to Carol Services in some of our other churches but that last week before Christmas was disrupted for us by the death of Judy's brother's partner up in Loughborough. That misfortune involved us in needing to be present elsewhere and our other intentions to be put aside.

Our services are increasingly benefitting from the Video equipment that is now installed. The singing at the carol service was especially notable and the graphics that John provided were very much appreciated. The service ended, as you might expect, with tea and cake and chat in the schoolroom.

And so we come to February, the month of our Church Council. What news and what challenges await us on this occasion, I wonder.

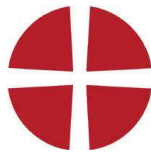
Elsewhere, twelve months ago was the time of Russia's incursion into Ukraine; how much sorrow that has given all, and not just to the Ukrainians themselves.

And our friends at St Bridget's have important discussions this month on the future of their church; our thoughts and prayers go with them all.

And finally, February is also the start of Lent; we walk with Jesus along his journey to the Cross in love and expectation.

We hope that you will all find good vibes as we journey through this month.

Harvey Allen



**Brent Methodist Church
Brent Knoll**

The New Year is suddenly not seeming so new anymore, is it? Since writing last, we at Brent Knoll have removed our Christmas decorations, shared in the New Year Covenant Service with our friends from East Brent and Brean and, of course, Easter eggs have popped up on the shelves in all the major supermarkets.

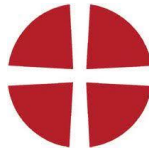
Of course, this month marks the beginning of the Lenten Season, an important time in our Christian calendar where we are encouraged to spend time simply being with Jesus as we take time to journey with him, onwards towards Holy Week and Easter. Some (not just Christians!) give things up during this period. Others take things on. But it is a time when we are encouraged to remember the importance of this Season and to take that time to stop and reflect as we look forward to the joy of Easter.

Rev Margaret Trapp has kindly agreed to lead a Link Lent Course here at the Methodist Church at Brent Knoll. These will begin on Tuesday 28th February at 10.30am (coffee will be available at 10.15am) and further details are outlined in the back section of the Link Plus. All are welcome!

Also this month, we are looking forward to welcoming our friends from East Brent and Brean to our chapel for our Link Service which will be held on 19th February.

From all of us here at the Methodist Church in Brent Knoll, we wish you a Shrove Tuesday filled with pancakes and a peaceful and meaningful start to Lent.

With blessings to you all
Rosemary Krull



Brent Methodist Church

East Brent

Looking back over the last months – Christmas was a very important part of our Church life. The Christmas Sale was well supported, always an enjoyable morning. We purchased two 8ft Christmas trees in December, one was placed at the front inside the Church and the other outside by the porch. The local school asked if they could come and decorate the trees again as they did last year. They had made all the decorations themselves and the trees looked lovely. Our Candle-Light service was also well supported, and we even had a few people from the village. Coffee and mince pies were enjoyed in the hall afterwards, a couple of the school children came with their parents as they wanted to see the Church with the candles lit, they weren't disappointed!! The Christmas morning service was also extra special as three persons were made members of our Church.

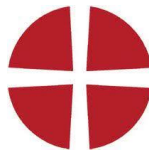
At last our Covenant Service was held on the first Sunday of January, which happened to be the first of the month, it was also a Link service which made it even more meaningful. Many thanks to the Brean members who supported all our services so well.

We have continued to heat the Church as usual on Sundays, as we couldn't expect the congregation to sit for an hour in the cold, how much this is costing the Church - who knows!!!

Looking forward we are so pleased that the Fellowship has restarted, meeting in the hall again, the second Tuesday of the month at 2.30pm and is well supported. We are about to have the hall floor sanded and resealed also the Church front door refurbished.

We say thank you to Rev Jim McKnight who agreed to step in and take our morning service this Sunday at a day's notice. We did enjoy his service very much and look forward to having him with us again soon. Things are certainly looking up at East Brent, we are such a happy caring congregation as a Local Preacher told us the other day "Everyone here is quite mad".

Jill Legg



Burnham, Highbridge, and Huntspills Methodist Church

Burnham

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

I can't believe it is another new year. Where did last year go? I would like to thank everyone who helped with the services over the Christmas and New Year period. We especially enjoyed having our choir sing at the Carol Service. We had a large congregation at the Carol Service and the Christmas Morning service. It was lovely to see families who were visiting relations for Christmas. It was especially nice to see so many children having a lovely time. There were times when the stewards had to bring more chairs in. The atmosphere was

lovely, everyone had a smile on their face and sung with such joy, it was an honour to be part of it.

As the new year starts our church is busy planning new things to do. We have lots of things we want to do but not always enough people to do them. If you have some spare time and could help with the coffee mornings that happen on most Saturdays or join the Sunday mornings coffee rota please let us know. We also need people to help with the Baby and Toddler group on Friday Mornings. If you can help, even once a month, could you please contact one of the church stewards.

We are hoping to start a knit and natter group. There is a meeting on Wednesday January 25th at 2 p.m. at our church to discuss times and activities. If you would like to find out more please talk to Janet Widdess or one of the church stewards.

Liz and other members of the church have again worked very hard to produce their first special Saturday night meal of the year. The latest meal was an English meal held on January 7th. A good time was had by all. Thank you to everyone who came and made the meal so enjoyable and for donating so generously. We are all looking forward to the next meal in a few months time. Thank you to everyone who helped make it such a special occasion.

During the Christmas Holidays I took my two Granddaughters, aged six and ten, to the Waffle Hub for the first time. We carefully looked at the sweet and savoury menu and all chose different sweet toppings. When we tasted the waffle for the first time shrieks of delight came from their mouths. They said they were the best waffles they had ever had. Then they asked if they could thank the people who made them, which they did. I have had to promise my granddaughters that I would bring them back soon. We had a brilliant time. If you haven't had a waffle do go along any Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday and try one.

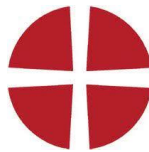
I have just realised it sounds like the only thing we do at Burnham Methodist Church is eat. We have Sunday Morning Services at 10.30

and a contemporary service every Sunday Evening at 5.00 p.m.
Everyone is welcome. If you are unable to get to church you could join the Bible Study or Coffee Morning on zoom.

Marian Foster.

Unfortunately, one of our organists, Des, is unwell and will be unable to play for us until he recovers. Our love and prayers go to him with our thanks for his playing over the last few years.

Steve



Burnham, Highbridge, and Huntspills Methodist Church

West Huntspill

Our services take place every Sunday morning at 11.00am.

The Prayer Group meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday afternoons at 2.00pm. February dates are the 7th and 21st. If you know of anyone in need of Prayer, please let Mrs. Christine Thomas know.

Coffee and Chat will be held on Friday the 24th of February. Do come and join us in a warm and friendly atmosphere. Donations in aid of Parkinson's UK

We had a very enjoyable breakfast on Christmas Day with friends old and new, followed by a short Service rejoicing in our Saviour's birth, which was led by Rev. Jim McKnight.



Every day is New Year's Day, believe
me cos it's true.

Every day's a chance to say, "I'll start my life anew".

Say to Jesus, "Forgive me Lord, for all the wrong I've done".
Trust in Him, believe His word, your new life has begun.

Every day is New Year's Day, now you should know it's true.
Speak to Jesus every day and He will speak to you.
Believe your sins are all forgiven, believe your slate's wiped clean.

The price was paid at Calvary's hill, there's no more payments due.
But as we're given our own free will, the next move's up to you.
Remember, He loved you from the start,
He's the Truth, the Life, the Way.
Ask Him now into your heart, Today's your New Year's Day.

(By kind permission of Doreen Manning)

Janet J & Kay

PLUS +++ POEMS, PRAYERS and OTHER MESSAGES

Articles of Faith – Victoria Methodist Church, Bristol

If you would like to see the Methodist Art Collection together with other religious art, then please visit the website vicmethevents@gmail.com for details of exhibition and events, commencing with an opening act of worship on 19th Feb and running through until 7th April. Rev Richard Sharples says

“To my knowledge, this is the first time works from the Methodist Modern Art Collection have been exhibited alongside art/artefacts from other faith traditions. The title of the exhibition ‘Articles of Faith’ suggests those beliefs which people of faith hold close to our hearts. We do believe different things, yet we share so much, and when we get under the skin to the inner experience of practicing our faith, then we draw closer together. Hence the strapline, ‘Where our paths meet’. We hope that those who are curious about religion, or who have no faith, will feel equally included.”

The Waffle Hub

This is just a quick update to let you know how The Waffle Hub is progressing.....

As many of you know already the Community Café is up and running in the Methodist Church in Burnham. Here we provide food (waffles with a choice of various savoury and sweet toppings) and drinks (hot and cold) at affordable prices for all. For those who cannot afford anything we run a pay-it-forward scheme where tips and donations are set aside to pay for their food and drinks. We have many customers who are very generous, so we never have to worry about if there is money to cover these costs. Over the past few months we have supported several homeless and less well off people with this scheme.

We are very grateful to the Burnham Church who have let us use their building free for our first four months of trading and also applied for a 'warm spaces' grant on our behalf. This has helped us considerably with the costs involved in heating the building and giving us time to get ourselves known in the community.

As a Warm Space we have recently been able to take on hosting the church's 'Knit and Natter' group (recently set up on Wednesday afternoons from 2-4pm on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month) and 'Burnham Carers Social Group' who meet on the 4th Tuesday of every month from 10-11.30am.

The Digital Champions part of The Waffle Hub is getting off to a slow start. We have had a few people who have come in wanting IT help and advice and we have been able to spend time with them, teaching and pointing them in the right direction. We aim to spend a bit more time advertising this service and getting it up and running properly in the near future.

Another new venture for The Waffle Hub is the Cookery Lessons we will be running from the middle of February. We have just purchased the equipment needed to teach 4 people at a time to cook simple, affordable, well-balanced meals for themselves/their families. Each lesson (a series of 6 lessons) will be free to all and everyone will take home the food they have cooked to feed their family for that evening. So far we have had a good response from those interested.

The success of The Waffle Hub and all its different projects is very much down to the very willing and capable volunteers we have and have had. All of them have given so much time, energy and experience to this venture and we are so grateful to them. We have been privileged to work with members from different churches in Burnham, volunteers from Somewhere House, and volunteers from our community all giving of their best to us. We thank, also, those who

have supported us with their custom, we couldn't have done it without you!

Liz Bennett

The Link Fellowship

For the December meeting, the Link Fellowship enjoyed an afternoon of Christmas poems and readings chosen by members, interspersed with favourite carols. This included a short sketch presented by West Huntspill members. This was followed by sharing in the contributions that had been brought for the afternoon tea.

We were challenged to use our brains when Gill Poulter took our January meeting. Regrettably due to illness and other factors, our numbers were rather low, but we had a most enjoyable time working out puzzles that Gill had inherited from her Grandfather. While these included some delightful "Say what you see" illustrations he had drawn that she showed us, I am challenging you to try out a few of the questions we were asked to solve. I shall include the answers next time!

The answers to these are all Parts of the body,

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. What a carpenter uses | 6. Two flowers |
| 2. Two tall trees | 7. Two kinds of fish |
| 3. Two students | 8. Weather cock |
| 4. Top of a hill | 9. Military equipment |
| 5. Small quick animal | 10. Four legged animal that beats. |

Our next meeting is on February 14th when Evelyn Tucker will give an afternoon on the theme of water. A welcome is extended to all. We meet in the East Brent Hall at 2.30pm.

Joyce Pipet

February Rain

By Charles Turner Dazey

O lonely day! No sounds are heard
Save winds and floods that downward pour,
And timid fluting of a bird,
That pipes one low note o'er and o'er.

Before the blast the bare trees lean,
The ragged clouds sail low and grey,
And all the wild and wintry scene
Is but one blur of driving spray.

O day most meet for memories,
For musing by a vacant hearth
On that which was and that which is,
And those who walk no more on earth!

And yet this dark and dreary day
Some brighter lesson still can bring,
For it is herald of the May,
A faint foretoken of the spring.

Beneath the ceaseless-beating rain
Earth's snowy shroud fast disappears,
As sorrow pressing on the brain,
Fades in a flood of happy tears.

And thus in darkness oft is wrought,
Through lonely days of tears and grief,
The gradual change by which is brought
To shadowed lives some sweet relief.

Submitted by Judy Allen

Link Lent Course

During Lent, we will be meeting at Brent Knoll Methodist Church on Tuesday mornings from 10.30am to 11.30am (coffee will be available for those who would like it at 10.15am).

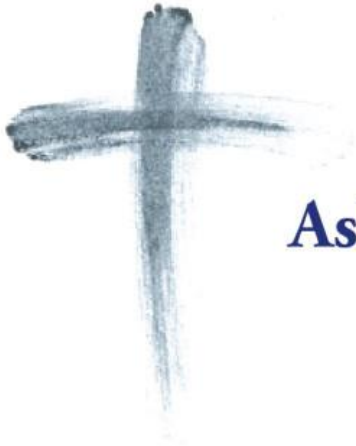
The theme will be "The Servant King" and will combine some Bible study and discussion with 'lectio divina', which is a devotional and meditative way of reading scripture in the Ignatian tradition.

The first meeting will be on Tuesday 28th February at 10.30am and all are welcome. If possible, please bring a Bible and writing materials.

10.15am: Coffee

10.30: Group starts with a prayer

11.30: End/sharing Grace



Ash Wednesday
— Lent Begins

**Please note that the deadline for the
March Link Plus is 26th February.**

DIARY

Date & Time	Location	Event
Weekly		
Wednesday 10.00am	Zoom	<u>Link Bible Study</u> Meeting ID: 842 8627 4955 Passcode: 358753
Thursday 11.00am	Zoom	<u>Link Coffee Morning</u> Meeting ID: 854 3680 5731 Passcode: 419002
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 9.00am – 5.00pm	Burnham	Waffle Hub Community Café and associated activities.
February		
6 th 7.00pm	Burnham	Messy Church Meeting
21 st 7.30pm	Brean	Local Preachers Meeting
28 th 10.30am	Brent Knoll	Lent Course (and following Tuesdays)
March		
22 nd 7.30pm	Uphill	Circuit Meeting
25 th		Representative Synod