

LINK PLUS++++

Special Edition – July/August 2020

Friends

The dawning of a new day is said to be one of the most impressive experiences in nature. As the sun starts to shine the birds sing, flowers re-open, and creatures of the day awaken. If you are like me, this is only a sight seen in the winter (the mornings are far too early this time of the year) and I sometimes think I should make an attempt to be present at dawn more often; because each daybreak, just like each new day will be like no other, ever.

By the time I write for the LINK again, I expect I will have met you in person as our churches come out of lockdown. Today we await a new church dawn, the start of a new church day. Just like each new day our new church day will not be like yesterday, it will be unique, a part of God's ongoing work of creation and redemption. To live in this new day we will need the enabling power and spiritual healing of God who makes this day possible. We will need God's grace.

I have included below a poem by Gerrard Kelly entitled 'This grace we have been given is enough' which I have found inspiring as we stand in these amazing times. Here we are, waiting in the hush and quiet just before daybreak, in the anticipation of what will be, and what God will do by grace.

Steve

P.S. A questionnaire is enclosed regarding the re-opening our churches.

This grace we have been given is enough

When the mountain set before us
won't move by faith
until by faith we start to climb,
it is enough.

When our cry for heaven's miracles
rings hollow,
like a doorbell howling through an empty house,
it is enough.

When from our waiting room of weakness
we say yes
to pressing on,
it is enough.

When we have reached the end of our energies
and face the end of ourselves
but can't yet see the end of our task,
it is enough.

Enough to know that you have loved us.
Enough that we are called before all time.
Enough that every fingerprint is valued.
Enough that you remember every name.

So we will embrace this grace
and turn our hearts to face grace.
Loosening the locks
on our personal space,
we'll make each home a place of grace.

We'll drink from your wells
'til we're wasted on grace;

we'll speak out your words
'til our tongues taste of grace.
And we'll live to love your laws
until our lives are laced with grace.

Down dark and dingy alleys
we will chase grace.
We will hold as something precious
every trace of grace.
We will celebrate and consecrate this grace,
because this grace we have been given
is enough.

Gerard Kelly

Brent Knoll

It's becoming increasingly difficult to provide any "news" during these strange and difficult times. Usually at this time of year, I would be writing about how our Spring coffee morning went, how we enjoyed fellowship and friendship at our church anniversary over a shared lunch and letting you know about our August coffee mornings where we annually meet together with Circuit and village friends each Saturday and raise monies for various charities. Of course, none of that happened this year. And we won't be meeting up to chat over coffee and cake during August.

But life still goes on in this "new normal" of ours. We have seen the strict lockdown rules under which we've been living for the past months gradually relax. Churches are now permitted to open for private prayer (providing they meet the strict risk assessment rules and follow the guidance from their denomination) and at the time of writing, worship may resume in July (whilst continuing to follow strict conditions). Brent Knoll Methodist Church will not be opening for

private prayer or worship in the immediate future, but as the situation changes, we will be sure to keep you updated.

And just as life goes on, our church life hasn't stopped. Many of us continue to meet via Zoom to join in worship and fellowship each Sunday morning or enjoy our own private devotion using the Order of Service which Steve sends around to us. Or taking part in the bible study group which Steve has been leading weekly during June looking at the book of Ruth. And many have been enjoying the fellowship of the weekly virtual coffee morning which Steve also hosts and for which we are all very grateful to him for doing so.

As we enter the summer season, we know it's going to be a summer the like of which we haven't experienced before. We are so fortunate to live in such a stunning part of our Country where, whilst adhering to social distancing rules we can go for beautiful walks with friends and family. People are saying that they are beginning to enjoy the simple things in life, especially in nature.

So, with that in mind, from all of us here at Brent Knoll Methodist Church, we hope that you have a safe and enjoyable summer as we continue to appreciate the real beauty that is on our doorstep. And it goes without saying that we continue to hold our Circuit and our community in our prayers.

God bless all
Rosemary Krull

Burnham

What a year 2020 has turned out to be so far.

We are now halfway through the year and for the last three months the country has been in lockdown causing so many events to be

cancelled with friends and relations unable to see each other unless they are tech savvy!!

We can now look forward as restrictions start to ease and within reason family and friendship can be renewed as life starts to return to the new 'normal' what else have we benefitted from?

Thanks to Steve's hard work many of us are now familiar with Zoom and through Steve's Sunday service, Bible study and coffee mornings we have all enjoyed sharing in this rather exciting technology, which has brought so many new faces and names to the meetings from across the circuit.

The Church buildings are being checked for a suitable return in the near future.

In spite of the virus we have proved that we can all pull together, neighbours that just use to acknowledge each other are now supporting each other with helping to shop for essentials, checking on friends by phone, email etc. and everyone seems to be much more friendly and through all of this the good Lord is here with us and guiding our words and deeds, so let's pray that the dawning of the second half of the year is going to bring us much closer together and lets look forward in renewing our faith and trust in the Lord for all that is to come.

Kind Regards
Geoff

Brean

So it is July already. And things are about to change. Not simply that summer is here, nor that it is time for children's holidays, but that it is time for Lockdown to be eased for everyone. Indeed it hardly needed to be given ten days' notice as there have been factions from

elsewhere who have already beaten the starter's gun and descended on our beaches. I have even heard people locally say that they are going to do their week's shopping on Thursday in preparation for an invasion and possible anti-social activity on the first weekend of July, a natural result perhaps of the release of energy that has been held in check for three or four months.

For those of us who have been granted those days of enjoying peace and solitude as Spring has gradually unveiled itself, of hearing the sounds of birds in greater depth and of striding out on our sandy beaches as we have walked our dogs, we can hardly sit in judgement on those who have been locked away in our cities. Nor can we fail to show sympathy for those whose businesses and employment have been wrecked by the strictures of Covid. For them we share in their relief and newness of life.

For our country and its people we hope for better days and a recovery to our economy, and yet the cycle of what Covid is doing, is still surging in many parts of the world and demands our continuing love and concern. It could still come back and catch us unawares.

We hope that the new freedoms will encourage our summer visitors to return. We may not be able to see them in church yet but perhaps meeting them in the street will suffice. One or two of our congregation have kept in touch with some of them over the winter, which has been nice.

Meanwhile we are of good cheer I think. Most have been able to tune in to the Zoom service on Sundays. Only Celia does not have the connection I think, and we have still heard her chirpy voice every Sunday over the phone; and Joyce's regular email has been answered by one and all.

Members have also linked into the Zoom coffee mornings on Thursdays and also to the study session on Wednesdays. The study group has become engrossed in the book of Ruth, finding out many new things and recognising how much differently we can understand the book and

respect each other for doing so. As one member said, it was comforting to find how many different interpretations there are even amongst the preachers; it gave confidence for others to join in too. Our thanks to Steve for his work in preparation and in leading the group; and as a special reward we have asked him to lead us in another study after the current one has finished!

It is a pity that we can't use our church more but we await the powers that be to give us permission, and we recognise that the shock of Covid 19 may make people cautious about returning in the first few weeks. Our thoughts go with our friends at Victoria church after they have decided to discontinue worship there and seek to find a home in other congregations over the next weeks.

When we had the printed copies of Link, this issue would have included August too, so if there is no bulletin next month let our good wishes carry over. Have a happy summer everyone. May God's blessing be with us all.

Harvey Allen

East Brent

I have been thinking about the ups and downs over the last four months. Our daughter told us that we were old and not allowed out, so she has been doing our food shopping. Gordon has been furloughed so is home all day, and we have had to have our dog put to sleep. But look at the ups, I have been able to spend five hours a day for twelve weeks gardening, Gordon has worked through my long list of jobs that needed doing.

Our daughter has gone back to work so we've been able to escape, we went to B & M – not very exciting, and also no meetings to attend. We are all looking forward to meeting together again, we have hand wash and wipes in place, we've dusted, cleaned the brass and cleared the weeds from the car park and Church.

Our congregation has always been well spread out around the Church with their own hymn books and the aisle will be widened by the removal of some outer chairs, so that's OK.

Whether we will still be able to have coffee afterwards will have to be thought about, but I am sure that can be sorted. I hadn't realised how much you could miss something until you couldn't do it any more, I've really missed the singing too!!!

I had to insert this poem!!

YOU NEVER WILL BE OLD

You never will be old with a twinkle in your eye,
With the springtime in your heart as you watch the winter fly.
You never will be old while you have a smile to share,
While you wonder at mankind and you have the time to care.
While there's magic in your world and a special dream to hold,
While you still can laugh at life **You never will be old.**

Jill Legg

**PLUS +++
POEMS, PRAYERS and OTHER
MESSAGES**

Congratulations from all in the link group of churches to Eileen Goundrey who celebrated her 90th birthday in June.

In the Time of Quiet

No one told the daffodils about the pause to Spring
And no one's told the birds not to roost or asked them not to sing

No one has stopped the bright green shoots
emerging through the ground

No one's told the sap to rest, deep within the wood
Or stopped the sleepy tree from waking, wreathed about with bud

No one's told the sky to douse its brightest shades of blue
Or stopped the scudding clouds from puffing headlong into view

No one's asked the lambs to still the springs beneath their feet,
To stop their rapid rush and quell each joyful bleat

No one's told the stream to halt its gurgle or its flow
And warned the playful breezes, not to gust and blow

No one's asked the raindrops not to fall upon the earth
And fail to quench the soil in the season of rebirth

No one's locked the sun down or dimmed the shimmer of the moon
And even in the darkest night, the stars are still immune

Remember what you value, remember who is dear
Close the doors to danger and keep your family near
In the quiet all around us take the time to sit and stare
And wonder at the glory unfurling everywhere
Look towards the future, after the ordeal
Keep faith in Mother Nature and her will to heal

(sent to Kay Lloyd from a friend)

A CHALLENGE

A WhatsApp group the Judy and I have belonged to over this Covid period has set itself a daily challenge. Over the weekend this has tended to be in the form of a puzzle. As far as I know none of the 15 strong group is a regular church goer (except for us that is), and yet the puzzle one weekend was to find 30 books of the Bible hidden within the paragraph. Have a go yourself. Some of the books are a bit obscure and yet most of the Group got them:

30 Books of the Bible This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket, on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much, he passed it on to some friends. One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his john boat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or a scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something

in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in this paragraph. During a recent fund raising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new record. The local paper, The Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Humana humbly puts it, "The books are all right here in plain view hidden from sight." Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. Also, keep in mind, that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus; there really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph waiting to be found. GO!

PS. If you really get stuck, write it all out again without spaces, punctuation, or capital letters (or joined up writing), and then look at it again.

Enjoy,
Harvey and Judy.

A Letter send home with the children at the start of Lockdown at one of the primary schools in the Taunton Area

As our time at school changes know you go with our love and blessing.
When you have the chance, go outside and enjoy the rain or the
sunshine.

Smile and wave, do a little jig or sing a song to those who can't leave
their homes.

When you share food, pause and remember those who may be eating less or having to eat things they don't really enjoy.

Remember all those things we learn about and practice at school, here's your chance to really do them.

Be forgiving – people are feeling a bit stressed

Be patient – sometimes you won't be able to do the things you want to

Be generous – share something, even if it's just a smile.

Show respect – everyone is precious and valuable, even when they are being difficult.

Encourage one another – we are all feeling a bit wobbly.

Work as a team – together we can do great things.

Try not to moan or fight or say things which hurt,
And then try some more.

Hug those people you can and above all show love to another, over and over again.

Store up your stories and your smiles until we are all back together again.

I thought it was a wonderful lesson for life.

Maureen Cavill