

LINK PLUS++++

Summer Edition 2023



Dear Friends

Enjoy this Summer whatever you are doing, wherever you are going!

I will soon be on summer holiday, and like many people Liz and I will need to make sure we have everything ready. We will need our passports, air tickets, transfer documents, hotel reservations – to name but a few. In addition, we will need to ensure we take everything we need for the 10 days away from home. If that were not enough, we have to ensure that those living with us, human and dog, are safe and

secure during that time .As is often the case, many of these things are last minute tasks, but a few need to be organised well in advance.

In our Bible Month we have been seeing visions of heaven and the time when God will bring all his purposes to their finale. In it there is more than one reference to the need for the preparedness of God's people. We think back to the words of Jesus who stated that we should always be ready for the return of God to us, which could come at any time and probably when least expected.

What do we need to do today to make sure we are ready to welcome the King of kings?

In all things – be prepared.
Steve

Circuit Matters

Stewards

Exciting news!!!!

We now have 6 (yes 6) new Circuit Stewards who responded to the call from the March Circuit Meeting. They are:

Sue Baldwin (Locking Castle)
Andrew Gilling (East Brent)
Rosemary Gilling (East Brent)
Robin Jenks (Uphill)
Janet Widdess (Burnham)
Tim Widdess (Burnham)

We give thanks for all who have heard God's call and responded by offering for positions of responsibility within the Church.

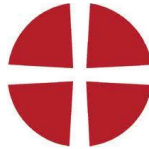
Rev Angie Hoare & Deacon Gary Hoare

As you will be aware, Angie and Gary leave this Circuit in July. Angie will

be sitting down (the Methodist term for retirement!) and Gary will be taking up a new post in Harrogate. Their leaving service will be on 16th July at Milton Methodist Church. Tea will be served at 5pm, followed by the service at 6.30pm. Everyone is welcome.

Rev Judith Lincoln

We welcome Judith (and her husband Roger) to this Circuit in September. Her welcome service will be at Milton Methodist Church on Saturday 2nd September at 2pm and will be led by Rev Dr Jonathan Pye, Chair of our Bristol District.



Brean Methodist Church

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

Did I tell you that the repair to the area behind the pulpit has now been completed. Well it has been, and a great improvement it has been for us. That I should even think of this to start a report just shows how little has happened this month. We were however able to welcome Rev Andy Hardwick, supernumerary minister, who came to the circuit last September, to lead us in worship for the first time. And much appreciated he was too.

The book of Revelation has, of course, been the theme of most preaching this month following the encouragement of our church centrally. Like the good stalwarts we all are, both preachers and congregations have grappled with its details and mysteries with fortitude. It is a good discipline to overcome our hesitations and I am sure we have all gained from the exercise.

And at the end of June Gary Hoare takes his last service for us. We haven't seen Gary much, or Angie either, over this end of the circuit, but we have been well aware of the great work that they have done over in the Weston end. They will both be missed and so we wish Gary well in his new appointment in the Harrogate area; to both we say a heartfelt thank you for your ministry in this circuit, and to Angie, may you find peace and contentment as you 'sit down'.

We are now embedded with our holiday visitors. Not many casual ones but our 'regulars' continue their faithful fellowship with us. We wish them well, as we do also those who work so hard to help their visitors have proper relaxation among us.

Our Anglican friends at St Bridget's are trying to raise funds and to create interest by holding a Concert in their church on Friday 7th July. Doubtless you will see advertising all around. They would be very pleased to see you there.

During June, Judy and I went up into Wales for a few days. I came back with an armful or two of books (as you do). We were visiting one of our longest established friends (sixty years in Judy's case), whose husband, John, had died earlier this year. John and I had spent the last ten years at least in reading and swapping each other's books. So it was an eclectic mixture that found its way into my possession, from biography (Terry Waite and Richard Holloway, retired bishop of Edinburgh) to books on spirituality and life by Karen Armstrong, and Francis Young (retired Methodist minister). There was one on St Augustine (I might get to that one eventually) and one about R S Thomas the Welsh priest and poet among others. I had been commended to him many years ago but had rejected the thought because I somehow imagined him as a dour Welsh presbyterian, However in my survey I picked the book up and read the first poem I came to. I was suddenly interested; I have submitted an extract for inclusion in this edition of the Link. It is about how to choose a priest in the rural Welsh situation. It is a bit tongue in cheek and it may not appeal to you, but it amused us no end.

Not much else to say, I think, except for the important matter of our annual Songs of Praise service. 3pm on August 27th, the Sunday of August Bank Holiday. We shan't have a morning service on that day, just the afternoon Sing out. We used to have 50 attenders in the days before Covid; in the last couple of years, it has been about 40, so let's try and get it back to pre-Covid levels please, if you can. Have a lovely summer from all of us. Enjoy any time away that you can manage.

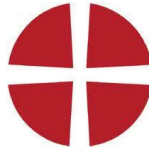
Harvey Allen

an excerpt from THE MINISTER by R S Thomas

They choose their pastors as they choose their horses
for hard work. But the last one died
sooner than they expected; nothing sinister,
you understand, but just the natural
breaking of the heart beneath a load
unfit for horses. 'Ay, he's a good 'un'
Jo Davis had said; and Jo was a master
hand at choosing a nag or a pastor.....
A young 'un we want, someone young
without a wife. Let him learn
his calling first, and choose after
from among our girls, if he must marry.
There's your girl, Pugh; or yours, Parry;
ministers' wives they ought to be
with those white hands that are too soft
for luggin' muck for pulling a cow's
tits. But ay, he must be young.

Remember that mare of yours, John?
To old when you bought her; the old sinner
had had a taste of the valleys first
and never took to the rough grass
in the top fields. You could do nothing
with her, but let her go her way.

Lucky you sold her. But you can't sell
ministers, so we must have a care
in choosing. Take my advice,
pick someone young, and I'll soon show him
how things is managed in the hills here.



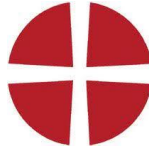
**Brent Methodist Church
Brent Knoll**

When we joined with East Brent to become Brent Methodist Church, we decided to join in worship together on each Sunday where there were five Sundays in the month. In July, it is East Brent's turn to host and we're looking forward to sharing worship with our friends there. This does, however, mean that there will be no service here at Brent Knoll on Sunday 30th July.

We will be holding our annual charity fund raising Coffee Mornings each Saturday from 10.30am throughout August. The charities which will benefit this year will be the RNLI (5th August), All We Can - the Methodist relief and development organisation (12th August), MIND (a charity supporting mental health (19th August) and Macmillan Cancer Support (26th August). Do come along for refreshments and a catch-up with Circuit and Village friends.

As Summer is now firmly upon us, from all of us here at Brent Knoll Methodist Church, whether you are going away or enjoying a staycation, we wish you all the joy of the holiday season.

God bless
Rosemary Krull



Brent Methodist Church East Brent

We have enjoyed six weeks of warmer weather too hot for some, people seem much happier & smile at you when the sun is shining, but not otherwise.

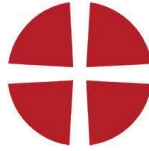
It's always upsetting to hear of the death of friends, but to lose two in a couple of months was very sad. Bert Bratt & Diana were married in our Church & continued to attend every Sunday until it became too much of an effort to continue to come out from Weston every week. Years ago we shared a lot of services and celebrations with Victoria Church and became very friendly with Rosemary Luker and Chris, we shall miss Bert & Rosemary.

We had the pleasure of welcoming Revd. David Easton last Sunday 18th who stood in for Chris and we look forward to seeing him again in a few weeks.

Being ECO minded the grass behind the Church has not been mowed for a couple of months, and the edge of the car park is covered with very pretty wild flowers, we have also had two cycle racks installed, Solar Panels, energy efficient light bulbs and off peak electricity heating is all included for our ECO rating.

It's a few years since we have had two members of our Church standing as Circuit Stewards, Rosemary and Andrew Gilling were welcomed with four others at the Circuit meeting, Rosemary has also offered to be Circuit Secretary. So once again East Brent as one of the smallest Churches can still provide personnel for this circuit. WHAT NEXT !!!

Jill Legg



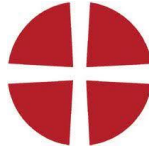
Burnham, Highbridge, and Huntspills Methodist Church
Burnham
<http://www.methodistchurchburnhamonsea.org.uk/>

This is being written just after the Annual Church Meeting. During it there was a discussion about how the church had changed over the past year.

The overall feeling is that the past year has been a good one. Although there were times of sadness, there were also several new beginnings that give hope for the future.

Looking back over a year gives perspective. The Waffle Hub has developed and is now a charity in its own right. The Baby & Toddler group has continued to develop with more people coming along. More events, such as themed meals, have been held and they have been increasingly well attended. Messy Church has been held twice in recent months. Coffee and Chat continues each Saturday. Some on-line activities that began during the Covid restrictions – worship, Bible study, coffee morning and Time Out on Tuesday – continue as a valued part of church life. The number of people attending worship has not increased dramatically, but there are people worshipping on a regular basis who were not involved a year ago. In general, people are more engaged, and some are taking on jobs and roles within the church. If we all work at it, we can make the next 12 months even better!

David Patient
for the Burnham Stewards



Burnham, Highbridge, and Huntspills Methodist Church West Huntspill

Our Services take place every Sunday at 11.00am. We now have an Informal service on the 2nd Sunday of the month, the next will be on the 13th August.

The Prayer Group meets on Tuesday afternoons at 2.00pm. In July on the 4th & 18th. And in August on the 1st & 15th. If you know of anyone in need of Prayer, please let Mrs. Christine Thomas know at the above number.

Coffee and Chat will be on the 28th July and on the 25th August. It is good to spend time with our Link friends and local visitors. Do come and join us in a warm and friendly atmosphere. Any donations will again be for Parkinson's UK (local Branch)



The following was sent in by Rev. Beth Bridges in the Link in 2009. We thought it would be good to repeat it now.

THE U IN JESUS

Before U were thought of or time had begun,
God put U in the name of His Son.
And each time U pray, you'll see it's true,
You can't spell out Jesus and not include U.
You're a pretty big part of His wonderful name,
For U, He was born, that's why He came.
And His great love for U is the reason He died.
It even takes U to spell crucified.
Isn't it thrilling and splendidly grand

He rose from the dead, with U in His plan?
The stone rolled away, the gold trumpet blew,
And this word ResUerrection is spelled with a U.
When Jesus left earth at His upward ascension,
He felt there was one thing He just had to mention,
“Go into the world and tell them it’s true
That I love them all – Just like I love U.”
It all depends now on what U will do,
He’d like them to know,
But it all starts with U.

We would like to wish everyone happy holidays.
Janet J. & Kay

PLUS +++ POEMS, PRAYERS and OTHER MESSAGES

APPLES

by Laurie Lee

Behold the apples’ rounded worlds:
juice-green of July rain,
the black polestar of flowers, the rind
mapped with its crimson stain.
The russet, crab and cottage red
burn to the sun’s hot brass,
then drop like sweat from every branch
and bubble in the grass.
They lie as wanton as they fall,
and where they fall and break,
the stallion clamps his crunching jaws,

the starling stabs his beak.
In each plump gourd the cidery bite
of boys' teeth tears the skin;
the waltzing wasp consumes his share,
the bent worm enters in.
I, with as easy hunger, take
entire my season's dole;
welcome the ripe, the sweet, the sour,
the hollow and the whole.

(chosen by Judy Allen)

The Link Fellowship

June Link Fellowship and beyond.

Our meeting on Tuesday 13th June was led by Evelyn Tucker who gave us a very interesting time with hymns and their stories. We were in good voice as we sang both the hymns she had chosen, and some that others had requested.

Time was spent as well in planning future events. Next month – on Tuesday 11th July we have an afternoon of board games followed by afternoon tea which Christine Thomas organised.

Looking ahead, we have decided that we will not meet in August, but our September meeting on Tuesday 12th will be taken by Revd. Steve Bennett and will include our AGM and communion.

We have plans for our November meetings. There has been an exhibition entitled "Threads through Creation" that has been touring various cathedrals over the last year or two. It is coming to Wells Cathedral from October 18th until sometime into November. Many of the Fellowship members are interested in going, so we are planning to have either a minibus or possibly a coach to go on Tuesday November 14th, leaving during the morning as we shall have left British Summer time behind.

Christine Thomas has been compiling a list of those interested, so if you would like your name to be added, please contact her on 01278 256 771.

Every blessing for an enjoyable summertime from the Link Fellowship.

Joyce Pipet

The Waffle Hub Community Café

Liz wrote this piece for the Baptist magazine – I thought I would share it with you.

What do you do when you think God is telling you to start a community café. Well, perhaps the first thoughts are that there are so many cafes in Burnham, why would we need another one? What's would be our USP (unique selling point)? Why would people come to us?

These were such difficult question at the time. I had no idea! So, a group of us started to pray about it. We had a vision of being friendly – but so is every café in the town – we would get people talking to each other – but people already talk to each other at other cafes – we would waffle, that is we would sell waffles and talk to the customers – but we won't be the only place in Burnham you can get waffles, and people do talk to their customers!

So, we prayerfully came up with other things we wanted to do to run alongside our 'place to waffle' These include:

- Pay-it-forward
- Homework club
- Signposting service
- Providing affordable nutritious meals
- Cookery classes to teach cooking skills
- Reaching out to those who are isolated within the community
- Being a place where Digital Champions could provide computer services
- Café and catering training.

Then the big question. How do you start a community venture like this – we had no idea! We heard about TCC (Transforming Churches and Communities) a Christian organisation that helps new church based ventures, and we commissioned them to help us. They carried out a feasibility study for the Burnham and Highbridge area, established that there was a need for what we were intending to do, and helped us think about our structure, legal obligations, and signposted us to funding opportunities.

On 1st September 2023, we opened The Waffle Hub Community Café in the Methodist Church on College Street because we did not have the funds to buy or rent our own premises on the High Street. Neither did we have the funds to employ people, so we started with volunteers from the Baptist and Methodist church communities. Soon we had made links with Somewhere House and benefitted from their ethos of volunteering to give back to the community. The people were now in place too!

Opening the café was the first challenge – none of us had ever run a café before. We started slowly with free advertising (Burnham-on-Sea.com and Local Reach) and the support of the Burnham church's community as customers. They were very kind and supportive and spread the word to their friends and families. We built a link with the Foodbank which also uses the Methodist Church as its base and are able to offer free (already paid for with Pay-It-Forward) food and beverages to those experiencing food poverty in the community. Then came the Russian/Ukrainian war and the cost of living crisis. We benefitted from a Warm Space grant and started to be used by more people including being used as a warm workspace.

Everyone – both customers and volunteer staff - who visited The Waffle Hub were impressed by the friendly, calm, and supportive atmosphere. The church provided a warm, safe, and serene space for people. I am sure that the presence of God was felt in the place, even if people did not recognise it as such.

With the café up and running and growing well, this was the time to concentrate on growing The Hub? We are not just a café, but all the services which bolt on to it (much like the spokes of a bicycle wheel attach to its hub).

The first venture was cookery lessons. Peter Hoffmann, who had been keeping his eye on our growth from the beginning let slip that he used to help run an afterschool cooking club (a wonderful God incidence) just as our thought were turning to how we might set up this venture. Peter has now taken this on and he has successfully completed a number of short and long courses. All of the equipment needed has been purchased by the Waffle Hub Community Café to support this exciting enterprise.

A number of community help groups became interested in using the Waffle Hub as their Burnham home. We are pleased to now host:

- Citizens Advice, who started providing their services in person to Foodbank users, were persuaded to use The Waffle Hub space for another adviser as drop-in help for all the community too.
- The Methodist church started a 'knit and natter' group which meet in The Hub space.
- A carer's support group
- The Shaw Trust

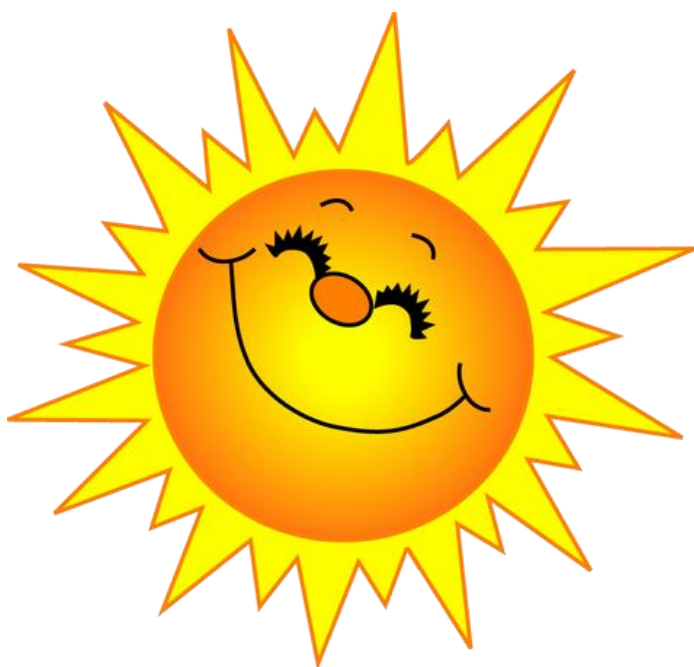
All these are a good fit for our Hub and fit well with our aim to be a service for the community.

But we are not stopping there. Plans are afoot to continue expanding community use of The Hub space with a repair café, and possibly clothes bank.

We carry our Christian ethos. We are a place where tolerance and integrity are critical. We act with confidence and compassion, acceptance and support, patience, and teamwork. We would love to see you.

Have a great Summer !!!

**Please note the deadline for
the September Link Plus
is 27th August**



DIARY

Date & Time	Location	Event
Weekly		
Wed 10am	Zoom*	Link Bible Study
Thurs 11.am	Zoom*	Link Coffee Morning
Tue/Wed & Thurs 9.00am – 5.00pm	Burnham	Waffle Hub Community Café and associated activities.
		*Contact Rev Steve for zoom links
July		
15 th 3.00pm	Burnham	Musical Cream Tea
16 th 5.00pm	Milton	Tea and Farewell Service for Angie & Gary Hoare
August		
5 th 10.30am	Brent Knoll	Charity Coffee Morning
12 th 10.30am	Brent Knoll	Charity Coffee Morning
14 th 7.00pm	Burnham	Quiz Night
19 th 10.30am	Brent Knoll	Charity Coffee Morning
26 th 10.30am	Brent Knoll	Charity Coffee Morning
27 th 3.00pm	Brean	Songs of Praise
September		
2 nd 2.00pm	Milton	Welcome Service for Rev Judith Lincoln
9 th	Kingswood	Representative Synod
14 th 7.30	West Huntspill	Circuit Meeting
19 th 7.30	Uphill	Local Preacher's Meeting