

# LINK PLUS++++

June 2022



## The Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> June

### Dear Friends

I would like to give thanks to God for the Queen, her life, her service to this country and commonwealth, and for her faith. Many churches and communities will be sharing these thoughts over the next week. I hope yours go well and that you have a memorable time.

As we come to June our thoughts turn to Stationing within the Circuit. Rev Angie Hoare and Deacon Gary Hoare will make decisions over the next few weeks about whether this Circuit is the one in which they will continue their

ministry. By the time I come to write the next Link Plus message things should be a lot clearer.

One thing is certain, with the shortage of ministers, and with our current financial position in the Circuit (since the closure of Victoria and Church Road we have been running at a significant annual loss rather than to increase your Assessments), it is unlikely that we will have the same number of staff from 2023 onwards. This will mean changes for all of us. I would ask you to pray for the Circuit Stewards and the Circuit Invitation Committee as they do this important work.

Critically, we are in desperate need of new Circuit Stewards. John & Linda Trebble are finishing in this role at the end of August and despite a plea around the Circuit for replacements, none have come forward. We will be left with 2 Circuit Stewards, and this will make their task impossible. We must have Circuit Stewards to remain a Circuit. If we do not, the Weston-Super-Mare and Burnham-on-Sea Circuit may cease to exist, and we may need to join with others. Please give this matter your prayerful consideration.

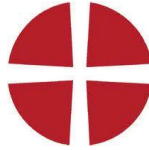
In the summer we will be embarking on the necessary work to merge Brent Knoll with East Brent, and West Huntspill with Burnham. All this has been necessary following decisions made at Methodist Conference last year. We hope this year's Conference decisions will not be so disrupting for us all!

I am sorry to bring difficult news in my message this month. I want our churches to be supported in mission, vibrant, and community focussed. The role of the circuit in supporting this is vital and the role of the Circuit Steward essential.

I know that everyone is busy within their local church as evidenced by the increase in activities reported in this Link Plus. Thank you for all you are doing. Please read about the great things that are happening in the Link Churches. Give thanks to God for your church and those around you.

May God continue to bless you, and may God bless those you love. God bless the Queen...and have a great Jubilee!!!

Steve



**Brean**

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

And so we come to Jubilee. In ancient days it was a time of emancipation of slaves and the forgiveness of debt, but I don't suppose that holds much water today.

Instead, we say thank you to the Queen for her dedication and fortitude and rejoice that she has shown us an example of commitment to her iconic task. Anyone turning up for our Monday coffee hour in recent weeks will have seen our ladies busy cutting up triangles in red, white, and blue balloon cloth. These were then sewn on to tape and now adorn the railings outside the church. I notice that there are pennants in blue and yellow also, a reminder that even in our time of rejoicing there is much hardship and injustice in the world.

As we looked back on the pattern of previous years, we all felt that the main focus of celebration in the village would be on civic parties and other participations and that the two churches would be better taking a lower key. So, apart from the flags, we finally agreed on a joint service at St Bridget's on the Sunday (at 1030) followed by a stroll with flags down to the Methodist church for a bring and share lunch. It being a festive weekend we didn't know how many holidaymakers would turn up so we therefore thought this would be the best arrangement. We shall keep our fingers crossed. And then we shall be fully into the month of the longest day. It seems incredible that the year is nearly half way through already.

Other than that May has been a fairly normal month. Our summer regulars are with us quite consistently, which is nice and Morag is updating Facebook page regularly also. It is nice to see that Janet W has got a Facebook page going for Burnham too which is worth linking in to once in a while.

We were pleased to be able to say goodbye and best wishes to Ildi as she prepares to start her three year course into the ordained ministry of our church. Thank you Ildi and we look forward to hear of your progress. As

indeed we shall for Stanley and Joyce's daughter-in-law who has also been accepted into ministerial training this year.

It is good to know that Burnham are emerging from Covid in good heart now. Judy and I have enjoyed going to their 'specials', superbly produced meals with an ethnic flavour. This last month it was an Indian meal that Liz and her helpers cooked for us. Previously it had been Ukrainian style and before that, Chinese. Nearly 50 people have been present at each of these functions. They were talking about doing Mexican next and though this isn't certain, it is good to support one another.

Between me writing this and when Link Plus is issued, Judy and I will have gone up north to attend our granddaughter's wedding in Cumbria. We are looking forward to it very much of course. She has asked me to do a reading for her. She is not a church goer and doesn't talk about God much but as I look at what she has chosen I can't help but feel that she, as have many of her generation, has got a sense of the Spiritual. I ask the question therefore, why are they not attracted to worship or other aspects of religion in the way that attracts us. Why do they say it is no longer meaningful to them? I have my own thoughts but they are best not for now.

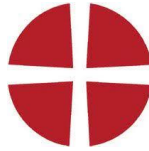
Here is the reading. I am told it is found in Les Miserables by Victor Hugo:

*The future belongs to hearts even more than it does to minds. Love, that is the only thing that can occupy and fill eternity. In the infinite, the inexhaustible is requisite.*

*Love participates of the soul itself. It is of the same nature. Like it, it is the divine spark; like it, it is incorruptible, indivisible, imperishable. It is a point of fire that exists within us, which is immortal and infinite, which nothing can confine, and which nothing can extinguish. We feel it burning even to the very marrow of our bones, and we see it beaming in the very depths of heaven ... What a grand thing it is to be loved!*

*But what a far grander thing it is to love! The heart becomes heroic, by dint of passion. It is no longer composed of anything but what is pure; it no longer rests on anything that is not elevated and great. An unworthy thought can no more germinate in it, than a nettle on a glacier*

Harvey Allen



## **Brent Knoll**

As reported in last month's Link, we met together as a church to discuss plans for our future. Our meeting was facilitated by our own minister, Rev Steve Bennett. It was a time for us to air our thoughts and our hopes. But also a time to look honestly and realistically at where we stand at the moment.

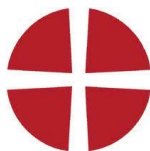
The repercussions of the Covid pandemic have hit our chapel quite heavily - and not just our chapel - so many churches of all denominations have been affected. Our congregation is now currently a small one and this, of course, affects our Sunday morning worship. We face the difficulty of finding people to help with the day to day running of our building - especially opening up each Sunday, stewarding and operating our music machine. Although we will be joining with our friends from East Brent to become one united church, there is little doubt that we will have difficulties in keeping our own chapel building open unless things change. It was agreed that we will make our final decision officially in October at our next church council meeting.

But we are still a hopeful people! Regardless of what happens in the Autumn, we are planning a celebration for the life of our chapel which has been part of the Brent Knoll community for so many years. We will be open for four consecutive Saturday mornings starting on 30th July for coffee and cakes and are also planning to hold a barbeque outside the chapel on Saturday 20th August. We will be decorating our church with photographs tracking the life and the people of Brent Knoll Methodist Church and we would love you to come and support us at this time. Any monies raised will be donated to charities, including local causes.

Please continue to hold our chapel in your prayers as we continue to hold you all in ours.

With every blessing from us all.

Rosemary Krull



**Burnham**

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

It has been six months since I last wrote for the Link and in that time a lot of things have happened. It is lovely to be able to say that as a church we have been very busy. We made it our mission to spread the word of God to other people in some new ways. We have gained some new members and seen the return of others. Some have moved back to the area, some have returned after a long absence or illness. It has been lovely to see them and watch them join in different activities.

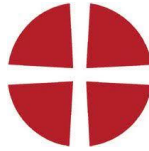
We have had some wonderful meals where we get to know not only people from our church but people from other churches as well as friends and relations that have been brought along. On April 30th we enjoyed an excellent Indian Meal cooked by Liz Bennet, Barbara Williams and some willing helpers.. It was lovely to see people from other churches as well as meeting people who do not usually come to our church. Some of these people now regularly turn up at events and support us in many different ways. A lovely time was had by all and we raised a good amount for church funds. The next evening meal will be a Mexican Meal on July 2nd at 6.00 pm. All are welcome.

If you have been to Burnham Methodist Church in the last few days you will have noticed some changes. The seating area has now been moved a little to make room for a new area that contains some very smart tables and chairs. It is hoped that this area will be used not just on Sundays but on other days. You will hear more about this from Liz Bennett.

A reminder that the Annual Church Meeting will be on Sunday 12th June after the morning service.

On a personal note, I would like to thank everyone who has been so kind since my bereavement in March. I would also like to thank everyone who made the funeral the very best it could be.

Marian Foster for the Stewards Team.



### **East Brent**

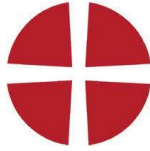
It seems a while since we were able to come back to meeting in person to worship together but we are still grateful for the fact that our whole, albeit small, congregation have all returned. Unfortunately, there are still illnesses about and we were very pleased to have Rosemary C. back with us once she had recovered.

People are beginning to take holidays and have visitors. Visiting grandchildren meant I missed last week's service and Humphrey's first visit to us. Those in Church were pleased to welcome not only Humphrey but his wife and son as well. By all accounts I missed an excellent service. I look forward to his next visit.

We are not always a very serious group but if you can't smile and enjoy being Christians together Church would be very dull and we do enjoy Brian's visits when he brings his own sense of humour and reminds us, again, that we have to let Christ shine through us for others to see.

Enjoy your holidays, your visitors and stay safe and well this summer.  
From all at East Brent,

Margaret



## West Huntspill

### Anniversary Celebrations "The Life of Jesus"

Yes, I'm afraid, it's another celebration! If you have any energy left after celebrating with Her Majesty, we would love to welcome you to join in our 171st anniversary celebrations (It should have happened last year, but, was cancelled, due to the pandemic!)



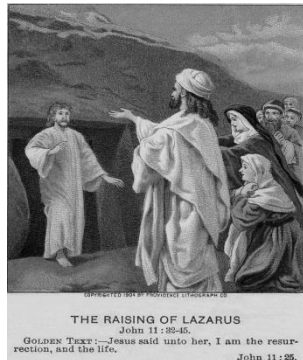
Many talented local people have been working hard to produce all the knitted characters and painting background scenery depicting the 24 stories from the Bible on "The Life of Jesus".

The church will open for everyone to come and enjoy the exhibition on:

Friday 24th June at 10-30am – 2pm  
Saturday 25th June at 10-30am – 4pm  
Sunday 26th June at 4pm – 6pm  
Light refreshments will be available

On Sunday 26th June there will be  
Thanksgiving Services at 11am & 6.30pm,  
which will be led by Revd Nicola Reynolds.

Maureen Cavill





# PLUS +++ POEMS, PRAYERS and OTHER MESSAGES

## My call to preach

Having been born into the Methodist Church I took the usual path as I grew up in that setting. First at a chapel in St Anne's in Bristol and then later when we moved to a new church in Filton, north Bristol. As soon as I was old enough, I trained as a Sunday School Teacher, a role to which I seem suited. In my late teens in a casual conversation with Betty, an ex-Deaconess, she asked if I was willing to join her 'preaching team' who shared in the services she led as a Local Preacher. Initially bible readings and prayers were the extent of my contribution but that moved on to sharing in sermon preparation and delivery.

Some months later she posed me a second question, had I ever thought of becoming a Local Preacher? It was in 1963 I was given a note to preach, a LP was arranged for me to accompany, and another appointed as my one to one tutor. The passage through On Trial to Full Accreditation in 1966 was much simpler in those days. Just 3 books to read and exams to take, Old Testament, New Testament and Christian Doctrine. There was a fourth topic, which was optional, on Worship & Preaching. The LP Meeting 'interview' was more of a formality than a challenge.

Perhaps that should be the point to stop my story but as my job took me to various locations to live across southern England each Circuit I moved into had its own challenges for me as a LP. However I will mention just one which for me was a major challenge and had profound effect on my interpretation of my Call to Preach.

In 1990 I moved to West Swindon. I immediately discovered that it was a large LEP with a theology and style of worship described as charismatic evangelical. I was also considered to be part of the 'leadership team' and was regularly appointed to lead worship in 3 Anglican churches. I felt that I had to assimilate a new depth and breadth to my Call to Preach which I took a while to accept.

John Trebble

## **THE WAFFLE HUB COMMUNITY CAFÉ**

As many of you know, with help and guidance from TCC (Transforming Churches and Communities), we are in the process of setting up a community café, The Waffle Hub, within the church building at Burnham. This is an ecumenical project and will help to meet the needs of our local community. It will be a place where people of all ages can meet and enjoy company over food, games and chatting, and maybe even a little learning.

We are in the very early stages of set-up now but hope to get the project up and running quickly. Our new steering group is very enthusiastic. We are very grateful to Geoff and David (Burnham property team) for all their help with getting a few niggly issues of the building into top notch order.

If you come to Burnham You will notice the tables and chairs in the area to the right of the dais, and the fact that the quiet prayer space has moved. If you happen to see a few notices and chart records going up in the kitchen over the next few weeks this is because we will have to be compliant with Environmental Health Legislation. There will be other changes too. Keep your eyes peeled, and if at any time you feel you would like to come onboard and help, we would welcome you with open arms. And don't worry you won't miss the opening; we're going to make a big noise about that!!!

Liz Bennett

### **The cost of living crisis**

The cost of living is of major concern for many at the moment. Rising prices in food, fuel and transport are forcing people to make hard choices over how they spend their money. The least well-off are the worst affected, with those choices being narrowed to heating or eating, or skipping meals to feed their children.

The Joint Public Issues Team have written a briefing to explain how we got to this point and what churches can do in response? If you want to read the briefing on the crisis, detailing the impact it is having on the country and offering ways to respond, it can be found at

[www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/economy/costofliving/](http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/economy/costofliving/)

Steve

## Adlestrop

by Edward Thomas

Yes. I remember Adlestrop—  
The name, because one afternoon  
Of heat the express-train drew up there  
Unwontedly. It was late June.

The steam hissed. Someone cleared his throat.  
No one left and no one came  
On the bare platform. What I saw  
Was Adlestrop—only the name

And willows, willow-herb, and grass,  
And meadowsweet, and haycocks dry,  
No whit less still and lonely fair  
Than the high cloudlets in the sky.

And for that minute a blackbird sang  
Close by, and round him, mistier,  
Farther and farther, all the birds  
Of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire.

submitted by Judy Allen

**Finally, please note the deadline for  
the July/August Link Plus is 26<sup>th</sup> June.**

# LINK DIARY

Date & Time	Location	Event
<b>Weekly</b>		
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
<b>June</b>		
2 <sup>nd</sup> 2pm – 4pm	Burnham	Jubilee Party in College Street
9 <sup>th</sup> 7.30pm	East Brent	Local Preacher/Worship Leader Meeting
14 <sup>th</sup> 7.00pm	Burnham	Sabbatical Meeting
22 <sup>nd</sup> 7.30pm	East Brent	Circuit Meeting
24 <sup>th</sup> – 26 <sup>th</sup>	West Huntspill	Church Anniversary Celebrations (Knitted Life of Jesus)
<b>July</b>		
2 <sup>nd</sup> 6.00pm	Burnham	Mexican Meal
5 <sup>th</sup> 2.00pm	Brent Knoll	Link Churches Meeting
30 <sup>th</sup> 10.30 - 12	Brent Knoll	Charity Coffee Morning
<b>August</b>		
6 <sup>th</sup> 10.30 - 12	Brent Knoll	Charity Coffee Morning
13 <sup>th</sup> 10.30 - 12	Brent Knoll	Charity Coffee Morning
20 <sup>th</sup> 10.30 - 12	Brent Knoll	Charity Barbeque
28 <sup>th</sup> 3pm	Brean	Songs of Praise