

# LINK PLUS +++

JUNE 2024

## **Rev Tim Widdess writes this month during the absence on Sabbatical of Rev Steve Bennett:**

Every day Janet and I pray using the Lectio365 app from 24/7 Prayer. Earlier in May I was challenged by a simple question: “What has Jesus done for me?”

It reminded me of the Monty Python film “the Life of Brian” and the scene where John Cleese asks the question: “what have Romans ever done for us?” and one by one up pops someone with an idea. The first suggestion is “aqueducts”, but the question is repeated “well, apart from aqueducts what have Romans ever done for us?” Several others interrupt but after all the interruption Cleese continues: “Well, apart from medicine, irrigation, health, roads, cheese and education, baths and the Circus Maximus, what have the Romans ever done for us? Then comes a final voice “Brought peace.” And Cleese replies “oh shut up”

In Luke chapter 4 Jesus sets out what is sometimes called his Nazareth manifesto.

*Luke 4:16–21 (NRSV): When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.” And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”*

The Lectio365 app asks further questions: “Has He met me in my poverty, my broken-heartedness? Has He set me free from bondage, opened my eyes to see truth? How has He brought beauty and gladness into my life?”

It is over 40years since I first met Jesus. At that time, I was working in the City of London for a Canadian Investment Dealer which later was taken over by a Canadian Bank. I was certainly not in financial poverty but I was spiritually poor. I went to Church, but “faith” had little impact on my life. Our Church in High Wycombe had a “Mission”, but I managed to stay away using work as an excuse. Thankfully as Jim McKnight told us on Sunday night “someone prayed for me”. One night I was awoken by God’s voice. He said: “stop running away stand up and speak!” For me this was good news – I found wholeness; I found peace and I found my vocation. What has Jesus done for

me? He has made me who I am today. Like John Newton I can say “I once was blind but now I see”.

Like those characters in the Life of Brian I could keep on adding things Jesus has done for me but I leave you with the question: “what has Jesus done for you?”

With every blessing,

**Tim Widdess**

## PRAYER.

Recently, Rev Judith Lincoln issued a circular in which she noted a growing need to encourage both personal and corporate prayer in order to build people’s confidence and enthusiasm. In her time here she has also met lots of gifted people with a heart for God and with great ideas.

So she proposes a get together for a wide ranging “How to Help People Pray” conversation looking at things like:

What’s already around us;

Do we want to restart Circuit Prayer days or mornings;

What resources do we have;

Whether seasons like Advent or Lent provide a focus and whether an ongoing Prayer Diary would be useful;

Any other ideas?.

Judith’s list of possible dates is too long to list here but she clearly wants ‘to get on with it’ and fix a date for the get together of between mid June and mid July.

So look out for further announcements

# BREAN

Well, I guess we all know about the Flower festival that the two churches in Brean have been holding during the last week in May. Morag did a great job advertising it, and we were greatly helped by the publicity given by Burnham-on-Sea.com

Judy writes:

Steve said it would take at least a year; we rose to the challenge and said, 2 months, and we did it.

Our Flower Festival has come and gone and has been a great success. Both churches, St Bridget's Anglican and our own Methodist church have looked beautiful with displays of flowers, in St B's celebrating the hymn All things bright and beautiful, and in our own church the months of the year was the theme. The lilies in the porch welcomed us as we came into our church with their familiar odours, and everything else joined in – didn't they smell lovely?

My lasting impression of the event here in the Methodist church has been of happy co-operation. So many people volunteered to contribute, from within our own church, from each of the five churches in our Link group, and even from outside the church itself. Several of the volunteers had no experience (well they have now!), but they waded in and did a splendid job, helping each other along the way as it was needed. Come the day all joined in to steward, chat and provide refreshments. Everyone contributed what they said they would from the start. And all got a sense of great fulfilment, I am sure.

The response from the visitors who came was also positive, people who attend our church and village, people from Burnham and the villages around, and holidaymakers too. Each one had his or her favourite, the displays were so varied and colourful and the response from visitors was satisfyingly positive.

So may I say a big thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make the week such a success; arrangers, stewards, tea makers and admiring visitors. And thank you too to those who provided their own resources, or made donations as they walked around the displays. Finance was not our major intention, rather that it was to provide a great occasion of which we could all be a part, but the generosity of the visitors was very rewarding.

Please don't ask when the next one will be. Let us just enjoy this one.

Thank you.

**Judy Allen**

# BRENT KNOLL

The interior decorating within the church is finally finished. And it was lovely to be back in our worship area for our first service, which included Holy Communion. There's still some work to do to the outside of the building, but by the time The Link goes out, all should be done. Thank you to all the ministers and preachers who adapted their services, which were held in the schoolroom whilst the works were being carried out.

We will be sharing worship with our friends at East Brent on the first Sunday in June, so please note there will be no service here at Brent Knoll on that Sunday. And on the 30<sup>th</sup> June, we will be celebrating our Church Anniversary with East Brent here at Brent Knoll, when we are not only looking forward to the shared worship, but also a shared lunch afterwards.

Our church traditionally holds coffee mornings on the first four Saturdays in August to raise funds for both local and national charities. And we plan to continue that tradition this Summer. We will provide the names of the charities which will benefit from these mornings in the next Link.

From all of us here at Brent Knoll Methodist Church, we continue to hold our Circuit in our prayers.

God bless

**Rosemary Krull**

# BURNHAM

As I write this the sun is shining outside and there are baby birds in my garden, so I feel that I have such a lot to be grateful for.

Messy Church met last Sunday with a good attendance. There was a sports theme for part of the time and a good time was had by all.

The next Messy Church is on September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

We are trying to do something a little different. On Saturday July 20<sup>th</sup> Barbara Williams is opening her garden for us. She says there will be fun and games involved. On Sunday August 4<sup>th</sup> we are trying to involve more people in church activities. We are calling it a Picnic. It involves bringing food to share as well as games and singing. There will be more information about these events nearer the time.

We have welcomed back some of our visitors who spend part of the year staying in Burnham. We have also had some new families join us which has been lovely. Some of them have brought children with them so Joan Easton has put together a lovely box of Bible based activities for younger people. This box will be put in the church for all morning services so that any child can use them.

**Marian Foster on behalf of the Stewards**

## THE LINK FELLOWSHIP

The theme for the Link Fellowship meeting in May was that of holidays and summer. We enjoyed a varied programme including, among others, a poem by Pam Ayres, another written over 200 years ago, a piece of creative writing by Kathy, and various holiday memories. Celia shared extracts from the journal she has written during the first holiday she had experienced on the continent over 60 years ago, while Christine took us on a short walk she had had with her youngest grandchild reminding us all of the native wild flowers that are in bloom at this time of the year. It was an afternoon that evoked many fond memories.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June at 2.30pm when we shall have Rev Rod Ingrouille as our speaker. All are welcome to come and join us at East Brent.

**Joyce Pipet**

# EAST BRENT

Where to start? ... Having made it to the Flower Festival in Brean at the end of this afternoon, I think I will begin by congratulating all those involved. It always amazes me what some people can do with flowers, not the arranging alone but also the imagination needed to fit a theme. Beautiful, I am not a gardener, and don't, therefore, have an endless supply of flowers, so, when it is my turn to supply flowers for Church on Sunday, I have to resort to buying them.. I have tried to make an effort to arranging them in a vase but with little success, they end up nothing like the bouquet I purchased; so now I have my foolproof method, with apologies to all flower arrangers, I LEAVE THE ELASTIC BAND ON!!!!. By the way, the cakes were lovely too.

We enjoyed the Link service at Brean for Pentecost. It is always good to get together and worship with friends from our Link Churches. Thank you to all those who come to East Brent, in order to lead our worship, which, over the last month, has included a look at the Methodist Class Questions, certainly food for thought, and the opportunity to exchange hearts (card cutouts!) bearing the words 'Jesus loves you'. Challenging and interesting times.

It seems like a very strange time to be mentioning Christmas, but we have finally sorted out the beneficiaries of our Christmas collection monies. We decided that we ought to do something in respect of our Silver #Eco status so a portion is being donated for a living water project, some to the ECO project and some to help build toilets in Africa. Thank you to all who joined us over Christmas and we hope you approved of our choice of recipients for your kind donations.

Alan and Charlene paid us one last visit before flying home but, unfortunately, John missed this visit because he and June have been very poorly. We send them our love and are keeping them in our prayers, and wish them and anyone else who is ill a speedy recovery.

Best wishes to all our Link friends from everyone here at East Brent.

**Margaret Scott**

# WEST HUNTSPILL

It will be our Chapel Anniversary on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June. We will be having an evening service led by Rev. John James. It would be good if you can come to share this service with us.



**The Prayer Group** will now be meeting on the first Tuesday of the month. If you know of anyone in need of Prayer, please let Mrs. Christine Thomas know.



**Coffee and Chat** this month will be on Friday the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 10.30am – 12 Noon. Please come and join us, we love to meet up with our friends from the Link Churches. This year we are now raising funds for the SOMERSET WILDLIFE TRUST



**Babes, Tots and Carers.** Meet on Wednesdays at 1.30pm till 3.00pm, term time only. Contact Carol Hester 01278 780730 for full details.

## **I BELIEVE IN MIRACLES (Matthew 10.29-31)**

I recently shared an incident with the Reverend and friends at our Church pop-up café. I said “There must be a sermon there” and the Rev. replied “I’ll wait for you to preach it”. So, here it is, sent as a “KISS” to you – i.e. I’m **Keeping It Short and Simple**. One night in mid April 2024, a cat called Izzy found a fledgling bird that had fallen out of its nest, took it home through the cat flap – which woke up her owner at 2am – and put the bird under the dining room table. This little fledgling was retrieved – alive and looking perfectly well – and placed in a make-shift nest inside a secure pet carrier. In the morning the cat’s owner called me (I live next door) to ask what to do with the baby bird because we were both leaving to go to Devon that morning. I immediately prayed for guidance and a neighbour’s name came into my mind. After a quick phone call the neighbour arrived within minutes and took the bird home in the pet carrier. Six days later I caught up on the news of what happened. This neighbour had a robin nesting in his garden shed with four fledglings – also a baby robin – and shut the door. The adult robin then continued to fly into the shed (through a gap above the door), taking in food for the fledglings. Then, all five fledglings flew out of the nesting area within days and are seen all doing well in the neighbouring gardens. Thank the Lord for this happy ever after story. I believe in miracles. Do you? Keep praying and trust in the Lord. God Bless, **Janet Thompson**

**Janet J. & Kay**

Poem selected by Judy

All In June, by W H Davies

A week ago I had a fire  
To warm my feet, my hands and face;  
Cold winds, that never make a friend,  
Crept in and out of every place.

Today the fields are rich in grass,  
And buttercups in thousands grow;  
I'll show the world where I have been—  
With gold-dust seen on either shoe.

Till to my garden back I come,  
Where bumble-bees for hours and hours  
Sit on their soft, fat, velvet bums,  
To wriggle out of hollow flowers.

(I remember W H Davies from my school days. Who else can remember the poem Leisure that begins 'What is this life, if full of care, I have no time to stand and stare')

And what about The Autobiography of a Supertramp, tales of his wanderings across America. Did anyone else do that for GCE O level.)



# ENDPIECE

At the beginning of this issue, Tim looked back at what drew him into this ministry, and still does. I guess that many of us can similarly look back at an important moment in our Christian journey. Some years ago, I found one such moment in a book by Marcus Borg, an American who grew up in the arms of the Lutheran Church in MidWest USA but who finished up in the Episcopal church. The title of the book was 'Meeting Jesus again for the first time', a riddle of a title perhaps but when you think about it, very apposite of our individual journey. His books and his UTube broadcasts have held me on my way. It would be good to hear some more stories. The next Link will be the last that Steve has asked me to compile before he takes over again and I am sure I can find space for a couple more stories of moments in other people's journey. Let me have them and I will do my best to include them

Harvey Allen.

Thank you for your help in providing articles for this Newsletter. Your endeavors are very much appreciated. Next month's edition covers both July and August, and church reports together with any other contributions should be with me by June 28<sup>th</sup> please.

Harvey Allen (harveyjallen@hotmail.com)

# DIARY DATES

<b>Regular days</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Event</b>
Monday (except Bank Holidays)	10.30am	Brean	Coffee Morning
Wednesday (restarts in September)	10.00am	Zoom	Link Bible study
Thursday	11.00am	Zoom	Coffee Chat
Monday-Friday	9.00am-5.00pm	Burnham	Waffle Hub Community Cafe and Associated Activities
Wednesday (term time only)	1.30 (to 3pm)	West Huntspill	Babes, tots & Carers
<b>Other Dates</b>			
Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> June		West Huntspill	Prayer Group
Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> June	2.30pm (to 4pm)	East Brent	Link Fellowship (speaker Rev Rod Ingrouille)
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> June	Evening service	West Huntspill	Chapel Anniversary
Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> June to Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July	Daily	Leeds	METHODIST CONFERENCE
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> June	10-30am (to noon)	West Huntspill	Coffee and Chat
Saturday 20 <sup>th</sup> July	Time to be advised	chez Barbara Williams	Garden party
Sunday August 4th	Time to be advised	Burnham	Picnic
Sunday August 25th	3.00pm	Brean	Open Air Service
Saturday 22 <sup>nd</sup> September	Time to be advised	Burnham	Messy church