

LINK PLUS +++

(The Newsletter for the Methodist Church in Burnham-on-Sea and its surrounding area)

A MESSAGE FROM OUR MINISTER

Dear Friends

March sees us enter into the season of Lent. Lent is later this year as Easter is one of the latest dates possible, 20th April, indeed it will not be later than this until 2030. As a result, the Easter Sunrise service will have to be a bit earlier than normal – the sun rises a minute before 6am!

In Lent we think about giving things up, not just for the sake of giving up, but to free space to allow God's Spirit to move more deeply within us. To help us this year the Methodist Church is inviting us to consider what our 'Soul Food' is through a daily devotional. The introduction reminds us that Jesus said we 'do not live by bread alone', and we are challenged to think in Lent about what sustains us. If you want to be part of this exploration, then you can sign up now on www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/soul-food and material will be sent to your email address.

The ingredients of the 40 days will include:

- **Monday:** A recipe video using easily available ingredients. We encourage you to cook and share this with your community—perhaps as a Sunday meal after church!
- **Tuesday:** A Bible study video, with discussion on questions from the week's Gospel passage.
- **Wednesday:** A craft video and resources, perfect for doing at home or in a group setting.
- **Thursday:** An inspiring story about how the Methodist Church and our partners work to ensure nourishment and care for all.
- **Friday:** A reflection on a classic soul song, revealing the good news within its lyrics.

- **Saturday:** *Soul Food Saturday*, a magazine-style video show, featuring a panel sharing weekly highlights and showcasing photos from across the church. We'd love to see what you're up to during Lent!

Of course, on Sundays we are encouraged to join together in worship.

I hope that you have a wonderful experience of Lent whatever you chose to do or not to do.

Steve

BREAN

(www.breanmethodistchurch.org.uk)

Happy but exhausted. That has been the experience of most of us now that half term is over and the (grand)children have gone back home . But for Kathy it has been a matter of coming back home, after a month or so in southern Australia and New Zealand, both north and south. A thoroughly enjoyable visit to family and friends and many photos by which to remember her visit (and the twelve flights she experienced during the time. Of course it was summer out there so she enjoyed gaining a tan while the rest of us (and that includes Roger who held the fort back here) froze, or nearly so.

Otherwise, February has been a relatively quiet month, the Church Council being the event of note. Even there, all things passed by pretty smoothly. Accounts were agreed (yes we are keeping our finances in order, just about), officers and others are prepared to continue in their tasks, and various continuing dates were settled. The result of our recent quinquennial was friendly, there being no significant matters that require attention. There has been re-decoration in the ancillary rooms and an update to the kitchen is proposed. The Council gave approval for the purchase of a new dishwasher. Our audio-visual equipment has been updated a little, and a discussion on introducing internet contact concluded that to do so could not be financially justified at this stage.

There were no occasions in February when we had to close the church in order to worship elsewhere; indeed we were privileged to be able to welcome other churches to us, St Bridget's, and then our friends from East Brent and Brent Knoll on another occasion.

We noted that the Burnham Ecumenical group are trying to be more attentive to the needs of village churches like ours, and Celia is hoping to establish a link with the Hinkley Point community who are living at Pontins at the present time.

We continue at the bronze level in the new Eco-Survey system; in some areas such as 'worship and teaching' we are at gold level and will continue to seek improvement elsewhere, though to get to the overall silver level is probably beyond us at this stage.

But now we look forward to March. Another 'away day' to start as we join with Link churches at morning service at Burnham where the new District chair (Dr Marcus Torchon) will be preacher. The following Sunday we worship at St Bridget's with our Anglican friends and on Mothering Sunday we host Brent Knoll and East Brent. At other times don't forget Pancake Day (4th) on the day before Lent starts; and we are holding our annual Sausage and Mash evening with Beetle Drive to follow on the 8th. We welcome you all to this event but it would be good to know how many so please let Judy know on 751434 to make sure we have enough sausages (a good variety, all from Pynes).

February has been important to Judy and I for another reason, for it was in February 1975 when we brought our family to live here, 50 'golden' years ago. I had known Brean since the late 1940s and

my parents and brother moved down here in 1960. I was living in London by then and had just started National Service. I had no experience of Methodism by 1960, that was still to come.

Welcome to March. Enjoy the flowers in our gardens and hedgerows

Harvey A.

BRENT KNOLL

(www.brentknollmethodistchurch.com)

On 2nd March, we will be joining our friends from West Huntspill, Brean and East Brent to attend a joint service at Burnham Methodist Church which will be presided over by our Methodist Chair of District, Rev Marcus Torchon. We are very excited about this visit, but, of course, there will be no service here at Brent Knoll that Sunday.

At the end of the month, on 30th March, we shall be joining East Brent and Brean Methodist Churches, at Brean, for a joint Mothering Sunday Service so again, there will be no service here.

As we are looking ahead to Spring, a date for your diaries. We will be holding our Spring coffee morning on Saturday 3rd May at 10.30am, more details of which will follow in next month's Link Magazine.

As always, we continue to hold the Circuit, its ministers and congregations in our prayers.

God bless

Rosemary Krull

EAST BRENT

(www.eastbrentmethodistchurch.org.uk)

This month of February, looking back, seems to have been a month of changing venues for church services.

We began on the first Sunday with our combined church meeting with Brent Knoll. Much was discussed about the state of the togetherness between the churches and what of the future. Prayer and thought are still ongoing and will be for a while. The next Sunday we were back to normal with our old friend Bryan Dallimore preaching. We enjoy all the preachers who come to us Sunday after Sunday and hope that they know that we appreciate their visits.

Sunday 16th was a Link service that I missed – partly through forgetting that the road to Brean was closed and there being so much traffic I couldn't turn round to retrace my steps. Consequently I missed the service. May I personally say a thank you to all the people who were concerned about me and enquired about me and my absence. Thank you all.

Finally I can't tell you about the last Sunday in February because these notes were written before it happened.

Evelyn M J Tucker

BURNHAM

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

STEWARDS COLUMN

March has arrived and we are looking forward to the clocks going forward, although I have already noticed how much lighter it is in the evening. In the March and April Links, there is always a mention of spring has sprung, daffodils are flowering, lambs are being born, the sky is blue, and the sun is shining (although as I write today, it is wet and damp)!

I wrote last time about my day's visit to Spring Harvest in Minehead, a first for me, and how I noticed the amount of people gathered together, with the same aim, a time to find spiritual refreshment, to hear God's voice and to be inspired to go back to our communities and make a difference. I'm not sure if or how I am making a difference, but the experience made a difference to me, and this year I am going for the full week.

Last month David wrote about the Alpha Course which had taken place, and we were privileged to hear from the people who attended at a morning service, about how this had been for them. Having not been to an Alpha Course before, I attended the introduction of a new Course last week, which is due to start fully in April. Why am I going, I really don't know, but feel it is what I need to do at this present time. If you would like to know more about Alpha, please speak with Tim or Janet Widdess, who are running the Course.

Rev Dr Marcus Torchon will be taking our service on 2nd March when we will be joined by our friends at West Huntspill, Brean, East Brent and Brent Knoll. This is an exciting opportunity to worship together and to hear our Chair of District.

Shrove Tuesday will be celebrated with a pancake evening on the 4th March, and we are holding a Beetle Drive on the 12th April. Our Baby and Toddler group continues on a Friday morning, and we have our next Messy Church on the 16th March. We continue with our Saturday morning coffee and chat at 10am, and our Weekday Communion is held in the Waffle Hub on a Monday at 12 noon.

Our Methodist Way of Life groups are also continuing as we move forward in our ever-changing world.

All our social events and notices can be found in the weekly notices and on the website, please come and join us.

From all here in Burnham and until the next time, look after yourself and each other

A child's prayer "Thank you for my friend next door, and my friend across the street, and please help me to be a friend, to each and every one I meet"

Marian Kingsbury

A thought

I find that all my thoughts circle round God like the planets round the sun, and are as irresistibly attracted by God. I would feel it the most heinous sin were I to offer any resistance to this compelling force.

Carl Jung, letter, March 1955

WEST HUNTSPILL

(www.wsbos.org./westhuntspill.htm)

This year it is our turn to Host “The World Day of Prayer” service.

“I made you wonderful”

Prepared by the Christians of the Cook Islands”

Friday 7th March

11.00am

Refreshments from 10.15pm

ALL WELCOME

Our Coffee Morning will be Friday 28th March from 10.30am till 12 noon. We will have the usual Sales table of Puzzles, Books, various items of Bric a Brac plus some home-produced items. As you know we do not charge for coffee, tea, cakes or biscuits, but we welcome Donations, which will be for the R.N.L.I.

Hello everyone. I just want to share the special day I had on the 20th February, which was when I turned 85. First of all, my eldest daughter brought me a card she had drawn of a primula, which earlier in the week she had taken a photo of in my front garden. Then later in the morning my younger daughter came and prepared lunch. The previous day she had asked me what I wanted to do. Well, for a long time I have wanted to see a mass of snowdrops, so I went online and searched for places to see snowdrops, but each one that came up mentioned that you needed boots and it could be very slippery, so I ditched that idea. Instead, I put in places of interest to visit, near here. One that came up was the Bishops Palace at Wells, and when I looked at it, saw it mentioned the garden, where there was quite a large display of snowdrops. It was lovely as there was no slipping or sliding, but plenty of photo opportunities.

In the evening, I was joined by my eldest daughter and two dear friends to settle down and join online The Big Prayer Gather – livestream from Capernwray Hall in Carnforth, Lancashire. Capernwray is a Christian Bible School and also a Christian Holiday venue. It was begun in 1947 by Major W. Ian Thomas (1914-2007) In “Our Daily Bread” this morning, 24th Feb. it was mentioned that he almost gave up, but through God`s indwelling Spirit the work continued and still does, bolstered by prayer. Students come from Canada, America, Europe, this country and further afield. My youngest granddaughter is currently studying at their winter school (September-March).

Towards the end of the Livestream the main speaker was introduced; Charles Price. Charles gave his heart to the Lord at Capernwray age 16 and later became Principal of the Bible School, which role he filled for many years. Charles spoke to us about prayer in a very clear and helpful message. Afterwards the four of us agreed that it answered some questions that we had been pondering. I, personally have listened to a number of Charles` sermons and found that he is able to open up the scriptures in a way that is most helpful.

The Big Prayer Gather – livestream is still available on Youtube

God bless you all.

Janet Johnson

THE LINK FELLOWSHIP

Included in the Link fellowship opening devotions was information that Celia Dewfall had received from All We Can about the immediate drastic impact the immediate withdrawal of overseas aid had had on the work of this charity which many of our churches support. This was reflected in our prayers.

The meeting continued with poems and readings on the theme of Spring. These ranged from beautiful classic poems to a nonsense poem that made us all laugh – a good tonic for a rather cloudy dull day.

It was good to see so many people there, but I became aware that our numbers will be depleted next time as Brent Knoll have a Church Council that afternoon. Our thoughts and prayers will be with them as they meet and as we share reflections on the season of Lent.

We would welcome anyone who would like to join us on the second Tuesday of the month at 2.30 p.m. at east Brent Church Hall. The next meeting is on March 11th.

Joyce Pipet

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2025.

The World Day of Prayer 2025 (formally the Women’s World Day of Prayer) will be celebrated worldwide on Friday 7th March and is a service prepared this year by the women of the Cook Islands.

The local service will be held at West Huntspill Methodist Church at 11a.m. with refreshments being served from 10.15a.m.

We invite all who would like to come to this international ecumenical service to join us for worship on that morning. You would be most welcome.

Joyce Pipet

HILDEGARD OF BINGEN

An item from Richard Rohr's Dail Meditations 24th February 2025. Rohr is a Franciscan priest who provides on-line daily contemplation material ([https://:cac.org](https://cac.org))

“Between the summer of 1098 and the autumn of 1179, a remarkable German woman lived eighty-one years at a time when half that long was considered a full life. The Über-multitasking Frau, this Benedictine nun founded two convents; organized the first-ever public preaching tours conducted by a woman; authored nearly four hundred bold letters to popes, emperors, abbesses, abbots, monks, nuns, and laypeople; worked as healer, naturalist, botanist, dietary specialist, and exorcist; composed daring music; crafted poetry with staying power; wrote the first surviving sung morality play; and spent decades writing three compelling theological works. Her long resumé is impressive in any age, but it pales when compared with her life, which she considered her best divine offering. “

And here is an example (translated from the German) of her writing

*O Holy Power who forged the Way for us!
You penetrate all in heaven and earth and even down below.
You're everything in One.
Through You, clouds billow and roll and winds fly!
Seeds drip juice,
springs bubble into brooks, and
spring's refreshing greens flow—through You—over all the earth!
You also lead my spirit into Fullness.
Holy Power, blow wisdom in my soul and—with your wisdom—Joy!*

Hug O'War by Shel Silverstein

I will not play at tug o' war.
I'd rather play at hug o' war,
Where everyone hugs
Instead of tugs,

Where everyone giggles
And rolls on the rug,
Where everyone kisses,
And everyone grins,
And everyone cuddles,
And everyone wins.

READ ANY GOOD BOOKS THIS YEAR?

Fifty odd years ago I submitted to a reading test conducted by a then well known educationalist called Tony Buzan. In his judgement I was sub-literate because I couldn't reach his norm of 400 words a minute. It meant I couldn't maintain a speed to maintain normal intelligence. My stand was that I wanted to be able to enjoy the beauty of the words I was reading. Either that or, being left handed, I was reading against the natural sweep of the eye; and that this slowed me down.

Some years later I was at a meeting where I noticed that the chairman, secretary and convenor, all seated at the top table, were all left handed. So much for Methodism I thought!

It hasn't stopped me reading, though it is nice to have a few pictures to break up the printed matter sometimes, and I do enjoy receiving books at Christmas to consume over the coming months.

And you, get any good books at Christmas? Whether you did, or whether you went out and bought your own, or whether you just picked up old stuff, why not share your favourites here? We don't need a full synopsis, just a few lines to tell us how you feel about the books. Let's have a couple of your favourites listed for the next issue of the newsletter – please. I'll start the ball rolling -

I started the year finishing up last year's quota, Tombland by C J Sansom. I had read it and six others six years before and had been impatiently waiting for the eighth in the series ever since. Then came the announcement that the author had died (in May 2024). As a tribute I turned to reading all 7 books in the series again. It is historic literature but thoroughly researched and the author details where he has deviated in order to make a better story. The hunchback hero of Tombland is a solicitor seeking justice for those who fall foul of church and state during the Tudor period. It takes us up to Norwich and is written in a style that gives us a colourful story written with great insight depicting life of the middle and underclasses, detail that is often missing from other literature of the period. Judy grew up in Norwich so this gave me another reason to read the book, but it is beautifully written and I enjoyed it immensely.

From an 800 page book to two hundred pages or so brought me to Finding the Edge by Jimmy Anderson the Test cricketer. His great friend and fellowpodcaster, Felix White, has put Anderson's thoughts into words very sensitively. The book starts with 'It's the first morning in 21years that I am waking up not as a test cricketer' and the follows Anderson through his life, his struggles, his conflicts, disappointments and successes to become the mature and thoughtful individual that he is. I grew to like the man enormously (even though he plays for Lancashire) and I recommended it to you.

That is my ration for this month. A couple of choices each from three or four of you whould fill a page which would be just right; and might give others inspiration for their reading list. HA.

THE LINK

Thank you to those who have contributed to this issue of Link Plus. I have been particularly pleased to see items that have extended beyond the strict confines of reporting church activities.

The first role of The Link is to keep the members of our churches informed but I am also aware that through the good offices of Nigel and Jo, access to this newsletter is possible on the Burnham church website, and I encorage other churches to follow a similar monthly pattern if they can.

It is a way of letting visitors and perhaps even potential incomers know what goes on in this area. We know at Brean for example that more than 150 people log on to our site from time to time. Even though many will never come here, at least they will know we exist.

So it is good that they know of our comings and goings but also, in the subject matter and in the way we write, they will know that we are not simply a load of fuddy-duddy churchites but a group of concerned, well meaning people with a sense of fun also.

Keep it up. We have a meeting of the Link committee on Tuesday and each of our churches should be represented and I hope there will be enough time to adequately discuss how to develop the newsletter for the future.

So if you have a memory, topic, incident, relationship or interest you think would be appropriate please feel encouraged to email it to me. I won't edit it (well the odd typo perhaps). I'll let you know if I don't think it suitable.

The closing date for the April issue is Wednesday 26th March. Send items to :

harveyjallen@hotmail.com

DAVID'S DISCUSSION GROUP

As I was just finishing off this issue, an email came in advising me and others of David's new venture, of using the Burnham Community Centre for a discussion group on matters of general interest. Time to Talk. Meetings to be held on the first Tuesday of each month starting at 2pm (on March 4th for the first meeting). As I read his list the first subject will be What did you want to do with your life when you were younger? But the Agenda is flexible and who knows where the discussion will go after that

It looks to be an interesting venture, held in the Community Centre in order to attract non-church goers.

DIARY DATES

| <u>Regular days</u> | <u>Time</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Event</u> |
|--|---|-----------------------------|--|
| Monday (except Bank Holidays) | 10.30am (except Bank Holidays) | Brean | Coffee morning |
| Monday | 12noon | Burnham - Waffle Hub | Communion |
| Wednesday | 10.00am (not 5th,12th March) | Zoom | Link Bible study (details from Steve) |
| Thursday | 11.00am | Zoom | Coffee chat (details from Steve) |
| Monday - Friday | 9.00am - 4.00pm | Burnham | Waffle Hub Community Cafe and Associated Activities |
| Wednesday (term times) | 1.30pm - 3.00pm | West Huntspill | Babes, tots & carers group |
| Friday | Mornings | Burnham | Mother & Toddler group |
| Saturday | 10.00am | Burnham | Coffee & chat |
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| <u>Other dates</u> | | | |
| March 2nd | 10.30am: preacher Rev Dr Marcus Torchon (District Chair) | Burnham | Morning Service: |

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|------------------------------|--|-----------------------|---|
| March 4th | 2.00pm | Brean | Link Committee |
| March 4th | 7.00pm | Burnham | Pancakes and Fellowship at Burnham |
| March 6th | 7.30pm | Milton | Circuit Meeting |
| March 8th | 7.00pm | Brean | Sausage/Mash & Beetle Drive |
| March 7th | 11.00am (tea/coffee from 10.15) | West Huntspill | World Day of Prayer |
| March 11th | 2.30pm | East Brent | Link Fellowship |
| March 12th | | | Presbyteral Synod |
| March 16th | 3.30pm | Burnham | Messy Church |
| March 20th | 7.30pm | West Huntspill | Local Preachers Meeting |
| March 28th | 1030am - 12noon | West Huntspill | Coffee morning: Donations for RNLI |
| April 12th | 7.00pm | Burnham | Beetle Drive |
| May 3rd | 10.30am-12noon | Brent Knoll | Coffee morning |