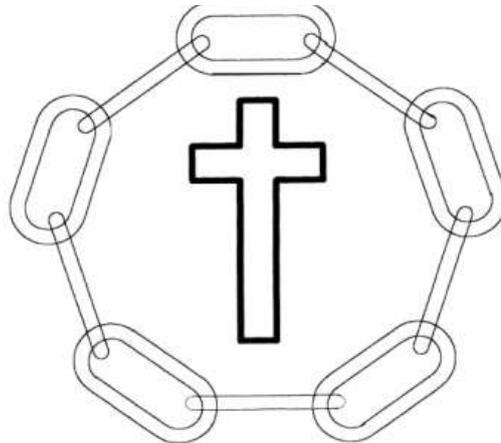

THE LINK

Methodist Link Churches Magazine

May 2016 Volume 51. No. 4.



BRENT KNOLL



EAST BRENT

WEST HUNTSPILL



BURNHAM

Minister Letter

Dear Friends,

Open or Closed

Liz and I passed a shop recently called ‘Close to Nature’. As we crossed the road to have a look at what it offered we noticed a sign on the door ‘Closed for the Winter’. It was as if the Spring had not arrived! Yet spring is here and springs new growth is abundantly evident. We know that nature was not really closed for the winter, but that it simply looked like that on the surface. The leaves and the flowers were gone but, as anyone caring for a garden will know, winter was a time when nature used the rain falling on the windfall of autumn to leech much needed nutrition back into the soil. It may look like nature had closed for winter but, in reality; winter was preparing the way for the day that spring dawned afresh.

I believe that there are parallels here for the church. Many people will try to tell us that the church is in a time of winter. By this they imply that it is gradually shutting up shop and that if people cross the street all they see is a notice that says something like ‘Closed until Jesus comes again’. And whilst it is true that there are many problems facing the Christian church in the western world (problems to which we are not immune here in Somerset), to see the church only in this way is to miss the picture of what is really happening. In my opinion, God is preparing all Christian people for the spring that is to come. God is preparing the ground, preparing Christ’s people, and giving the Holy Spirit as nourishment for the future that God intends. So I cannot agree with those who say that God has finished with the church, but that should not make us complacent.

Each spring brings new delights as well as the old and familiar. Old familiar plants spring up in new places and this makes every springtime, every renewal of gardens and hedgerows unique and different. This will be true of the work and witness of God’s people too. There will be familiar things (personal commitment, personal witness, prayer, study, evangelism, pastoral care, and worship) but these will be used in new

ways and in new places. This is how the church of the future will flourish.

As we ask God to nourish us in this time, may we see in this spring a sign of the faithfulness of God who is always with us. May we also pray that God will prepare us for the springtime of His church and make us part of God's renewing work.

Steve



Deaths

Joan Turner Died 26th March Thanksgiving Service at Burnham 12th April



Calendar

APRIL

Sat 23rd 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Shoppers Coffee at Burnham
Sat 23rd 7.30pm. The B'h & H'b Choral Society Concert at St Andrew's Church
Mon 25th 11.00 - 4.00 Photographic Exhibition at St Andrew's until Sun May 22nd not Sunday afternoons
Tue. 26th 2.30pm E/B Link Villages Fellowship Deacon Gary Hoare
Sat 30th 10.00 - 1.30 B/H Spring Fair at Burnham
Sat 30th 10.30am B/K Brent Knoll Spring Coffee Morning and "Bring and Buy Sale"

MAY

Wed 4th 8.00pm B/H Wednesday Group - Informal Games & Supper
Sat 7th 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Fund Raising Coffee Morning by Dorothy & Helpers
Tue. 10th 2.30pm E/B Link Villages Fellowship Mrs Linda Trebble – Musical Personalities.
Wed 11th 12.00 for 12.30 B/H Church Lunch.
Fri 13th 7.00 for 7.30 Quiz & Supper at St. Andrew's
Sat 14th 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Shoppers Coffee at Burnham

BRENT KNOLL METHODIST CHURCH

SPRING COFFEE MORNING and Bring and Buy

SATURDAY APRIL 30th 10.30AM

EVERYONE WELCOME



BURNHAM

www.methodistchurchburnhamonsea.org.uk

STEWARDS COLUMN.

As I am writing this I am reflecting on the Easter Season and the services and meeting that took place. I was lucky enough to be able to take part in most of the Lent Course that ran in the Burnham area. The sessions were led by Rev. Steve Bennett and the Burnham Baptist Minister Rev. Steve Ayres. They came under the heading of ‘Fruitfulness on the frontline’. It was lovely to sit with Christians from three different Methodists churches, three Church of England groups and the local Baptist Church to discuss the topic of the week. We discussed many different things including speaking up for truth and justice, how to make God work on my frontline, the small things that make a difference, how can we spread the word and what is your ‘frontline’? I must admit at the beginning the topics sounded a little daunting but while discussing it with others I realised that I knew more about it than I thought. By the end of the sessions I had learnt a lot about being a Christian and an awful lot about myself. If you were unable to

get to these meetings this year do try and join in the ones next year as they are very enjoyable and you learn a lot about the topics as well as learning new things about yourself.

It was lovely to see so many visitors at the services during Easter Week, especially those hardy souls who did any of the early morning ones. It was lovely to join not only our usual congregation but many visitors to the Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Morning services. Over the previous few weeks we had been putting the symbols of Easter under and on the Easter Cross, made from our old Christmas Tree. These symbols gave a powerful message to us all. Before the Easter Morning service the cross was emptied so that during the service the whole congregation were invited to put daffodils on this cross. The finished Cross was a delight to see and really made us think that it was time for Easter Celebration.

At this time of year we see the signs of Spring and new hope all around us. There are new born lambs in many of the fields nearby and we have birds trying to build nests in our garden. This year we have an extra blessing to thank God for, the safe arrival of our fourth grandchild, Gracelyn Aston on April 4th. As we look around at this time of year we see God's hand everywhere.

We have two stewards retiring this year, so we would like to thank Carol and Hilary for all the work they have done in the past few years, they will be missed. We are very pleased to have two new stewards join our existing team of Joan Wilkins, Marian Kingsbury, Ann Smith and myself. We thank Ann Hall and Geoff Stait for stepping forward to fill the vacancies.

Marian Foster.

BREAN

www.brean-methodist-church.home.dhs.org

‘Come on. It’s half past five’, said Judy. ‘Time to get up.’ ‘Yergh’, I thought as I stirred awake. ‘Too early.’ I had set my alarm for 5.40am and still hoped I would sleep through it. Surely there’s a get-out clause for those of us with senior years. But it seemed not, and we rolled out of the house at five to six. By the turn of the hour we were driving into the car park. ‘I knew you were coming,’ said Steve, ‘there was a light on in your house as we drove past!’

Quietly those of us thus gathered walked out of the car park and past the remaining houses, still shuttered up of course, and their occupants blissfully unaware of our venture. It was still dark though a half moon (as well as our torches) gave us some sense of orientation. Brean Down rose like a brooding rock above us, daunting yet mysterious as though it remembered its past and would confront us with its present at any moment.

Slowly we climbed its path and in the slow dawn, the world around us gradually revealed its vistas. It still wanted a good half an hour to sunrise when we reached that first big corner where the path doubles back on itself before continuing along the other side of the promontory. In the gloom we could just make out each other’s silhouette, black objects against the dark sky. Below us we were surprised to see the lights of Brean the size of a small town which is what it is at this time of the year. Inside the still darkened caravans and chalets people slept on, unaware of the great promise that the day would bring.

On either side of the Down as we looked to the west the moonlight gave a sparkle to the watered sand left after last night’s tide; further away we could see Hinkley Point, symbol of this world’s power, and on the other side of the Down lay Cardiff and the hills beyond to remind us that we are a unity of countries. In between lay Steep Holm, island of history, and Flat Holm with its guiding lighthouse. Below lay the beaches of Uphill and Weston with their communities behind them and then as we followed the Mendips round, could we then see Glastonbury through the dawn sky with all its Christian myth, and then Brent Knoll

where we had been a week earlier observing those crosses being planted; and of course, to the south were Burnham, Highbridge and the Huntspills. All the Circuit lay in our view, by imagination even if not in full detail. A proper scene as we contemplated the Presence of this morning.

In the light of our torches we shared our worship sheets (for Steve was well prepared as you might expect), lustily we sang our hymns to the accompaniment of four gulls above us, the heavenly host in our midst, we said our prayers and heard the reading. Twelve we were, from various churches in the neighbourhood, Methodist and otherwise, in good heart and unity

It was still a few minutes before dawn as we looked down on Weston Bay and recalled that Angie and Gary and members from Weston churches would even now be gathering on the beach there to make their own praises.

Resurrection morning! He is risen indeed!

In that time just before dawn light often seems to come upon us in snatches, as though someone has turned on another switch somewhere in the background and in that ghostly atmosphere some of us climbed a little further onto the centre of the Down before we turned and descended via the steps this time. As we did so, the first shafts of sunrise appeared above the Hills to crown our morning with blessing.

Somewhere about now, Liz said 'Wouldn't it be nice next year if we could share breakfast together after all this.' To which all present said, 'Amen'.

Later in the morning, Jim McKnight celebrated our Easter communion with us in his own inimitable style. A thoroughly joyous occasion marred only by Jim's own ankle injury that impeded him somewhat and which needed hospital treatment later in the week. Thank you Jim for being with us in spite of your own inconvenience. Now in this Post-Easter season we look forward to Pentecost and the coming of the Spirit. May it be a blessing to us all

Harvey Allen



BRENT KNOLL

www.brentknollmethodistchurch.com

Minister Rev. Steve Bennett

Our church anniversary is on Sunday 8th May and as we'll be following our service which Rev Steve is taking with a "bring and share lunch".

A reminder that our Spring Bring and Buy Coffee morning will take place on Saturday 30th April at 10.30am and we look forward to seeing our Link and Circuit friends to share a chat with over coffee and refreshments.

Several of our church family have been under the weather recently and have been very much missed at Sunday worship. To all of you, we wish you a speedy recovery and you are all in thoughts and our prayers.

God bless

Rosemary Krull



EAST BRENT

We have had several good services of late, which is not always the case, but it is good to see new additions to the Local Preachers list. Our congregations are keeping quite stable at present with several back from holidays and illness (after saying this of course last Sunday 10th was our lowest). Yet we had such a marvellous service from Rev. Margaret including a new hymn that also went well considering the few, the singing went well and overall it made one feel uplifted for the rest of the day. With summer approaching the mid-week meetings will be coming to a close, the Link services have already ceased for the season.

At East Brent the scaffold around the Church has now been removed and the solar panels are generating electricity, so now to the next project of removing the pews, although not all are in favour, the

decision has been made and anyone wishing to purchase a pew at £50 which includes the cushion then contact me (they are being reserved quite fast). We have chosen the new chairs after careful consideration and should be in place in about 8 weeks.

Having chairs of course will give a problem to our Candlelit Carol Service and a new system for the candle holders will be required, if it is to be continued!!!

“BUT OF COURSE IT WILL”

All of these alterations have been achieved and paid for with the generosity of the East Brent congregation, without having to ask for any Circuit Finance!!!

As the treasurer I thank them all for making it so easy to look after the finance.

Gordon Legg



Minister and Circuit Superintendent

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**The Deadline for the
June 2016 “LINK” is
Sunday 22nd May 2016**

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