

LINK PLUS++++

May 2022

Dear Friends

In this month we will be thinking about the Jubilee celebrations, and what as churches and God's people we should be doing in our communities.

- We could have a service of celebration
- We could organise a party, either as a church or as individuals in our streets
- We could join with community events and be part of the celebrations organised by our town or parish.

Whatever we do, we need to find time to give thanks for the life, work, and Christian witness of the Queen. In 2012 a book was produced for the Diamond Jubilee, and in my last Circuit in Nottingham, we gave one to each member and encouraged them to buy one for a friend. The book spoke about her Christian values and how she worked out her Christian 'vocation' to be the Head of State.

This year many organisations are selling a book called 'Our Faithful Queen' written for the Platinum Jubilee. Only costing £5 a copy, the CPO website says *'Superbly produced and sensitively written, this 64-page gift book includes many rarely seen photographs from the Queen's early life through to the present day, as well as prayers from a book of devotions given to the Queen to use in the days leading up to her coronation. It provides a powerful witness to the Queen's enduring Christian faith and will be a real asset to help you reach your communities during this Platinum Jubilee year.'*

Have a look! www.cpo.org.uk/our-faithful-queen A preview of **all** the pages is available there and it might be something you would want to buy to give away! If you are ordering more than 50 copies, then they are only £1 each through.

[www.hopetogether.org.uk/Shop/Products/501463/Hope Together/Books/Our Faithful Queen.aspx](http://www.hopetogether.org.uk/Shop/Products/501463/Hope%20Together/Books/Our%20Faithful%20Queen.aspx)

I hope your celebrations go well.

Steve

Brean

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

Judy and I played hooky from church last week. (Whoops!) We went to Oxford. Several weeks ago, a friend WhatsApped a group of us saying that there was a highly recommended exhibition of the paintings of Camille Pissaro (an Impressionist/Neo Impressionist artist from the second half of the 19th Century), on display at the Ashmolean Museum and did anyone fancy going with them. Interesting we thought, but we didn't respond. But a week later one of the group said, Help! I have double booked, does anyone want these other tickets please?

So we said, Well why not? It fitted into recent lectures we had attended at The Arts Society to which we belong. So we paid up and come the day, all nine of us piled into two cars and made the journey.

It was a super exhibition (still on if anyone is interested) and the way it was arranged it helped us to see how the artist developed both as an artist and as a human being, how he was influenced by those who came before him and how he influenced those who came later. And because a large proportion of the paintings were landscapes and other views, it was an interesting account of life in 19th Century France. There were some portraits too and even a few self portraits from different stages of his life – how the artist saw himself and others; fascinating. All about connections in other words.

Covid has forced us to cut back on excursions like that, and on other visits that take us out of the home environment and I wonder why, as we have come out of lockdown we seem to have lost energy. I have sometimes wondered how much of it is because we are getting older; but perhaps the real reason is that our bodies are getting used to lesser activity and need stimulus. Whatever the reason, our visit to Oxford left me keen on our next venture.

The same thing happened going to watch the cricket at Taunton later in the week. My mind wondering whether it was all worth it became replaced by looking up when the next match was on.

Our lives do not, or should not, stand still, and they are deepened, enlivened, made more real, as we move on and as we share them with others.

It left me wondering whether coming to church is following the same pattern. Having Zoom available during the pandemic was a blessing but now that Covid's hold has relaxed, has Zoom been an easy way out and have we lost appreciating the value of renewing our connections with church friends and of corporate worship.

At Brean fortunately we have been able to keep our congregation together and have been at or near full strength ever since the church has been reopened; and we have gained a great deal from that.

We are also fortunate in that we have four preachers in our midst and when, recently, we learned that the following day's preacher was not able to fulfil an appointment, Rose phoned round and John was pleased to take hold of the reins. Thank you John for that.

On the previous week, Easter Day, we had just over 20 present. We were particularly glad that Steve was able to share the worship with us, especially as he had also led the mission to the top of Brean Down for the dawn welcome to the Risen Christ. Easter is a time of new birth and it gives a great deal of reassurance to smaller churches that we are dealt with fairly when our Superintendent minister can do that..

New birth and that doesn't just mean lambs either. Rose and Steve's daughter, Vicky gave birth to a daughter, Evelyn, during the month. So congratulations to Vicky and Adam, and of course to grandparents too. We pray God's blessing, and hope that all will continue to go well for you.

But not such good news for Kathy who, having lost her son a few months back, has now to struggle with the loss of her grandson (her son's son) in a motoring accident in Bristol. How very sad. We pray for God's strength and comfort for all the family.

May brings an increase to the warmth of our weather and renewed evidence of life in the countryside around. Good to see our friendly visitors again and to develop our friendship with them. We hope to see them continuing and perhaps to meet up with others too. Indeed during our coffee morning at the beginning of the month a stranger came in wanting to look round the empty church. How lovely she said, such a wonderful atmosphere.

I seem to have been affected by Connections and Warmth in this report, so as May presents itself to us and with it all the hope and assurance of a new

season, we send you our greeting for the remainder of this Eastertide and for the summer that lies beyond.

Harvey Allen

Brent Knoll

At the time of writing, I have just come back from our Easter Sunday celebrations. We had a wonderful time of fellowship, made especially joyful as we were joined by our friends from East Brent Methodist Church. The theme of our time together was hope out of hopelessness, joy out of despair and new life springing forth.

And there will be new life for both of our churches, as at both our church council meetings, East Brent Methodist Church and Brent Knoll Methodist Church have agreed to join together on a permanent basis. For the immediate future, both chapels will remain open for worship each Sunday as we look to the feasibility of keeping our Brent Knoll Chapel open. Whatever the outcome of our future discussions, we plan to have a summer of celebration for the life of our Chapel, so watch this space! And we do ask that you keep us in your prayers as we look towards making decisions, some of which may well prove difficult.

On Sunday 1 May, we will be joined, not only by East Brent Methodist Church but also our friends from Brea, as we share a Link service led by our Chair of District, Rev. Dr. Jonathan Pye.

As we ask you to keep us in your prayers, be assured that we keep our ministers, our churches and our Circuit in ours. With every blessing on behalf of us all at Brent Knoll.

Rosemary Krull

Burnham

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

Our Easter morning service was a wonderful celebration of the resurrection. At the beginning of the service a large empty cross stood by the communion rail. Early in the service every member of the congregation brought forward flowers that were attached to the cross (yes, there was chicken wire there as support). It came alive with blooms of all sizes and colours in a wonderful reflection of the joy of Easter Day. Following the service, the cross was moved outside so that passers-by might enjoy it and perhaps pause to consider the meaning of Easter.

Last month in this slot, Marian reflected on how things were getting back to normal with Covid becoming more manageable and people's diaries filling up. That trend continues with new activities starting up.

The weekly notices are a good indication of this. In addition to the continuing Zoom events, Babies and Toddlers group meets weekly and Saturday Coffee Mornings are in full swing. Also, a new 'House Group' has begun to meet. The initial 5-weeks will be led by Joyce and Stanley Pipet looking at the book of Ruth. After that, other Bible-based series are planned.

At the end of March, a Ukrainian meal was enjoyed by many from the congregation and beyond. It was a lively social time and raised over £865 in support of relief for displaced Ukrainians. By the time you read this there will have been another country-themed meal served: this time an evening with an Indian food.

The 'House Group' and the meals are initiatives resulting from the congregation's discussions about the way forward for the church around the Methodist Way of Life topics. A future activity is a Jubilee Street Party in College Street to be held on 2nd June in partnership with the Baptist Church. Also springing from discussions of the way forward is the idea of creating a church-based Community Café. The organisation Transforming Churches and Communities has undertaken a feasibility study to explore the options of how such a café might work in Burnham. The findings will be presented and discussed at the church on Saturday 14th May at 10am. Everyone is invited to come along and find out more.

David Patient for the Burnham Stewards

East Brent

It was a pleasure to have Angie take our service for the first time at East Brent on Palm Sunday the Palm Crosses were distributed and following the service we had very interesting discussions with coffee & biscuits. How do we follow that, well the following week Easter Sunday we at East Brent went to Brent Knoll and were delighted with the welcome they gave us, we shared communion and later had miniature Easter Eggs, then coffee and biscuits, the art class during the week had decorated pebbles and we were each able to choose a couple to take home, Rosemary Krull took the service with Revd Margaret assisting on communion duty, it was a well organised morning, thank you Brent Knoll.

We are back home in East Brent this last Sunday in April with Janet Widdess and we understand Tim is bringing his guitar so we look forward to this. We continue to have our regular support from our members each week and thank them for their generous help and giving. Our total sent to All We Can for the Ukraine appeal was £350 and we send late Easter Greetings to all our Methodist friends.

Gordon Legg

West Huntspill

AT LONG LAST we are almost ready to Celebrate our 171st Anniversary. We are looking forward to welcoming you to view our display of knitted characters telling the “Life Story of Jesus” (including Parables and Miracles). A good number of local people including some of you have spent time knitting and preparing backdrops, for which we say Thank you.

We will be open to the public on

Friday 24th June 10.30 – 2.00pm

Saturday 25th June 10.30 – 4.00pm

Sunday 26th June 4.00 – 6.00pm followed by a Circuit Service at 6.30pm

We are planning to serve Tea and Coffee during the opening times, if you are available to help with this or to “Meet and Greet” as a Steward we would appreciate your help, for an hour or so.

I look forward to hearing from anyone willing to help and to seeing you at the end of June.

Christine: telephone 01278 256771

PLUS +++ POEMS, PRAYERS and OTHER MESSAGES

Burnham Community Café

We are considering starting a community café in Burnham Methodist church. We have commissioned a feasibility study to explore the options of how this might work. TCC (Transforming Churches and Communities) have undertaken this study on our behalf and will be reporting back with their findings on Saturday 14th May at 10am. Please come along and find out more about it. This meeting is open to all who are interested.

Liz Bennett

My call to preach

You may remember that there is a series in the Link at the moment called "My call to preach ". Joyce Pipet has suggested to me that I write one and, of course, I always do what my wife tells me to do.

To begin at the beginning, when I was coming up to five year old and ready to start day school our next door neighbours who were Methodists said to mum, "Hey, the kid's old enough to go to Sunday school - we will take him with us next week." So I went to the local Methodist Sunday school at about the same time I started at the local Roman Catholic day school.

When I was about twelve our Methodist Minister came along to the boys' and girls' bible classes and said "It is time you all became Church Members I am starting membership classes next week and I expect to see you all there. In those days you did what you were told to do, so we all turned up and eventually became junior members of the Methodist Church. When I was about fifteen, I was told "It is time you became a Sunday School teacher", so I was given a book of lessons and began Sunday School teaching.

As time went by, on a Sunday evening after church, I went with my mates on our motor bikes to coffee bars and we spent the rest of the evening slowly drinking cups of coffee and feeding the juke box with coins. When I was approaching seventeen a group of ecumenical young Christians who belong to an organization called the National Young Life Campaign took over one of the coffee bars on a Sunday evening and offered free coffee to any one who would come in. As young apprentices it was irresistible to us. I was happy going, I did

not feel threatened, after all I was a Sunday School teacher. I had a shock, these young people were different, they talked about Jesus, and knowing and serving Jesus in a personal way. At church we always talked about doing things for the church and serving the church. The outcome was that I asked Jesus to come into my life as my personal Saviour.

This spiritual experience changed my life and I wanted to tell others about the Jesus I had come to know. I approached my Methodist Minister and he gave me a note to preach or rather he said, "You now have a note to preach and if anyone asks to see it I will write one for you." Methodism was far less bureaucratic in those days.

When I was on note as a local preacher I heard about Cliff College, which is a Methodist College that trains lay people to become preachers and evangelists. I applied to Cliff College and was accepted. When I was a student there, I felt that God was calling me to become a Methodist Minister. There was a problem. In those days to candidate for the Methodist ministry you needed to have four 'O' levels. I had left school a few weeks after my fourteenth birthday and went into the motor trade. I had no paper qualifications at all. There were several of us students who felt called to the ministry in the same situation. In those days Cliff College kept on a few students for a second year called "student staff" who worked in the mornings around the college in the building and worked in the gardens and grounds and studied in the afternoon and evening taking their 'O' levels. I became one of those. I became a fully accredited Local Preacher in March 1962. At the end of that college year I went back to Guernsey to work and to candidate for the Methodist ministry. In their wisdom the Methodist Church accepted me and sent me to train at Richmond College in London. It was there I met Joyce who was training to be a schoolteacher at Southlands College in Wimbledon. If the Methodist Church had sent me to train in Bristol I should probably never have met Joyce as we came from different circuits in Guernsey.

A thought from Stanley Pipet

After finishing my contribution to "My call to preach" I was reminded that God does call other people to serve in His Church in many other ways. I was reminded of a poem that I came across several years ago.

Think of a meeting without a clear agenda
Think of a chair with no one in to lead
And how should we fare without some minutes taken?

No reminder kept of actions we agreed
We thank you Lord for those who mind our business
We thank you Lord and bless your holy name.

Think of a Sunday without any notices
No way of knowing what's coming day by day
Think of a Link with nothing but blank pages
How shall we tell what people have to say?
We thank you Lord for editors and typists
We thank you Lord and bless your holy name.

Think of an offering but nobody to count it
Pay into the bank or check the envelopes
Think of a covenant without the tax refund
For the simple reason no one knew the ropes
We thank you Lord for those who keep the records
We thank you Lord and bless your holy name.

Think of a cash book without any entries
Columns ruled and ready but nothing more to show
Think of a ledger no debts and no credits
How shall we know how much we own or owe?
We thank you Lord for treasurers and accountants
We thank you Lord and bless your holy name.

Think of a building, the lighting and the heating
But maintenance unplanned and no one has a clue
Think of insurance and legal complications
Without expert guidance on what we ought to do
We thank you Lord for business skills and effort
That help your church to praise your holy name.

Stanley Pipet

New Facebook Group

Burnham Methodist Church has now got its own Facebook group.
Please feel free to join and to post photos and comments, news and views
and notices about forthcoming events.

Janet Widdess.

Brent Knoll Crosses

A big thank you to all who helped with the crosses on Brent Knoll this year. Cedric has sent me this excerpt from the Link Magazine...

Following discussions between local Anglicans and Methodists it has been decided to erect three large crosses at the top of Brent Knoll for Easter. Everyone will appreciate this is a wonderful opportunity to remind thousands of people using the local motorway, just what the real significance of Easter is. In order to be seen the crosses have to be very large and consequently rather heavy, so plenty of manpower is required. Will any able bodied men in the Link Churches who are able to help with the erecting of the crosses please contact me to ensure that this job is done efficiently.....It is hoped to erect two crosses on Monday 24th March with the third being placed in position on Tuesday 25th March, followed by a short act of worship.

Steve (from March 1986 Link Magazine written by Les Jenkin)

May by Henry Sylvester Cornwall

Come walk with me along this willowed lane,
Where, like lost coinage from some miser's store,
The golden dandelions more and more,
Glow, as the warm sun kisses them again!
For this is May! Who with a daisy chain
Leads on the laughing hours; for now is o'er
Long winter's trance. No longer rise and roar
His forest wrenching blasts. The hopeful swain,
Along the furrow sings behind his team.
Loud pipes the redbreast – troubadour of Spring,
And vocal all the morning copses ring.
More blue the skies in lucent lakelets gleam,
And the glad earth, caressed by murmuring showers,
Wakes like a bride, to deck herself with flowers.

Prayer for us oldies.

Some lines with tongue in cheek from Anon of an earlier age (but attributed to a lady called Peggy Caustin)

Lord, thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older, and will someday be old. Keep me from getting talkative, and particularly from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on

every subject and on every occasion. Release me from craving to try to straighten out everybody's affairs. Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details, give me wings to get to the point. I ask thee for grace enough to listen to the tales of others' pains. Help me to endure them with patience. But seal my lips on my own aches and pains, they are increasing and my love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally it is possible that I may be mistaken. Keep me reasonably sweet. I do not want to be a saint. Some of them are so hard to live with but a sour old woman is one of the crowning works of the devil. Make me thoughtful but not moody, helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom it seems a pity not to use it all but thou knowest Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.

Judy Allen

The Methodist Tapestries Project

The Weardale Museum, in Ireshopeburn, County Durham, is promoting the Methodist Tapestries Project, which will show the history and heritage of Methodism via the medium of embroidery. Relating stories not only local to the Museum but those of regional, national, and international interest, the Project currently has forty-nine panels at various stages of construction and is looking for volunteers to take on further designs. I have received this from the project....

"As we especially value input and involvement from Methodist communities, I am writing to ask if you would be so kind as to forward this email to ministers in your district's circuits so that they could enquire whether any of their members might be interested in participating in the Methodist Tapestries Project. Contributions of local stories that illustrate Methodist history and heritage are always appreciated, and of course if any potential stitchers were to come forward this would be excellent."

For further information, please email the Project Coordinator Liz Walsh (contact@methodisttapestries.org.uk) or visit the website www.weardalemuseum.org.uk

Steve

**Finally, please note the deadline for
the June Link Plus is 30th May.**

LINK DIARY

Date & Time	Location	Event
Weekly		
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
May		
1 st 6.30pm	Milton	Circuit Service
10 th 7.00pm	Zoom	Circuit Safeguarding Meeting
14 th 10.00am	Burnham	Community Café Project (contact Liz Bennett for details)
28 th All Day	TBC	Stationing Training
29 th 10.30am	Brent Knoll	Church Anniversary
June		
2 nd 2pm – 4pm	Burnham	Jubilee Party in College Street
9 th 7.30pm	East Brent	Local Preacher/Worship Leader Meeting
14 th 7.00pm	Burnham	Sabbatical Meeting
22 nd 7.30pm	East Brent	Circuit Meeting
24 th – 26 th	West Huntspill	Church Anniversary Celebrations (Knitted Life of Jesus)
July		
5 th 2.00pm	Brent Knoll	Link Churches Meeting