
THE LINK

Methodist Link Churches Magazine

November 2009 Volume 44. No. 9.



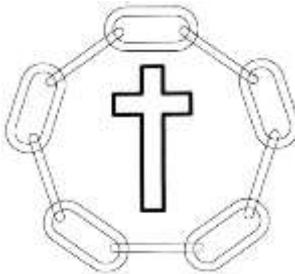
BREAN



BRENT KNOLL



WEST HUNTSPELL



EAST BRENT



BURNHAM ON SEA

Minister's Letter

Julie and I moved in on the 24th August. Two days later we were off to the Greenbelt Christian Festival which takes place each year in Cheltenham. We have been attending Greenbelt annually for over 20 years and always find it spiritually uplifting as well as informative – a kind of charging of the spiritual batteries.

Each year the festival has a theme and this year it was “living in the long now”. It refers to the way in which we often have to overcome our impatience and wait upon God if we are to see his plans come to fulfilment. Often the waiting can take a very long time, generations even – remember how the Israelites had to wait for 40 years in the wilderness before seeing the promised land?

Julie and I felt that we were “living in the long now” as we waited to come to Burnham. It was in early January when we met with a group of students at Wesley College in Bristol, on a dark rainy night, to await the arrival of the Principal – Rev. Dr. Jonathan Pye, from the Stationing Committee in London. He duly arrived clutching a handful of white envelopes which he proceeded to hand around. That was the moment when we discovered where we would be living and working for the next few years. But it seemed a very long time from then until the moment of our arrival and beginning work on the 1st September.

Since we arrived and have begun to get to know the churches and the people in the Link, I also have a feeling of “living in the long now”. What are God’s plans for the Link Churches in the coming years?

We live at what I believe is an exciting time for the Methodist Church. We hear much said about church decline but we also hear about new initiatives through projects like “Fresh Expressions” and “Family Friendly Churches” through which churches are rediscovering how to serve their communities and how to take “church” out to those who are

unlikely ever to come in to us and may never otherwise hear the wonderful news of the gospel message or discover how Jesus is relevant to people's lives today.

The challenge for us all is to rethink how we "do" church to find ways in which we can be more open and approachable for people living in the culture of today. This might mean doing what we do but doing it better, or it might mean trying new ideas and approaches alongside the things we do now!

Whatever we do must be focussed on our calling as a Church:

To increase awareness of God's presence and celebrate God's love

To help people to grow and learn as Christians through mutual support and care

To be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice

To make more followers of Jesus Christ.

(Taken from "make a journey of faith – The Methodist Church")

Above all we must remember that it is God's mission in which we are engaged and that it is to Him that we must take the time to listen and then act. When we are led by God to new places and to follow new ideas – the results may take time to appear and may not be what we expect- because we "live in the long now".

Best Wishes

Andrew

CALENDAR

OCTOBER

- Tue. 27th 2.30pm. LINK Villages Fellowship - Sue Hunt - Wiltshire Farm Foods.
Sat. 31st 11.00 - 3.30. JAM FESTIVAL & Lunches Burnham in aid of the RD Fund.

NOVEMBER

- Sun. 1st am Traidcraft table in the Hall Burnham.
Wed. 4th 8.00pm. Wednesday Group - Craft Evening.
Thur. 5th 2.30pm. Thursday Fellowship - Bob Telfer – Fire Precautions.
Sat 7th 10.00 - 12.00. Coffee Morning in aid of Action for Children.
Tue. 10th 2.30pm. LINK Villages Fellowship - Paul Temple - Work in Tanzania - Collection.
Sat. 14th 10.00 - 12.00. Shoppers Coffee Morning Burnham All Welcome.
Wed. 18th 2.30pm. Burnham Pastoral Committee at 6 Brightstowe Road.
Thur. 19th 2.30pm. Thursday Fellowship - Joyce Dunbavan – Sounds and Voices.
Sat. 21st 10.00 - 12.30. BURNHAM CHRISTMAS FAIR.
Sun. 22nd LAST Day for items for the December - January LINK
Sun. 22nd 6.30pm. LINK Advent Service.
Tue. 24th 2.30pm. LINK Villages Fellowship - Alison Crowther-Smith – Shibori.
Sat. 28th Coach Trip to Worcester Christmas Market. Great Day out. To book phone Ros on 783652.
Sat. 28th 10.00 - 12.00. Shoppers Coffee Morning Burnham All Welcome

DECEMBER

- Tue. 1st 7.00 for 7.30pm Burnham Christmas Dinner at The White Cottage
Wed. 2nd 8.00pm. Wednesday Group - An evening with Joyce Pipet.
Thur. 3rd 2.30pm. Thursday Fellowship - Sandra Brown – “A little bit of nonsense”
Sat 5th 10.00 - 12.00. Coffee Morning in aid of the RD Fund -
Sun. 6th am Traidcraft table in the Hall
Tue. 8th 11.45 for 12.00 LINK Villages Fellowship - Christmas Buffet.

**Coach Trip
to
Worcester Christmas Market
on
Saturday. 28th November.
Great Day Out
To book phone Ros on 783652.**

Churches Together. Highbridge and Burnham and SWYM

South West Youth Ministry (SWYM) is a Christian organisation, who offer formal training to young people to enable them to pursue a career in Youth/Community Work.

The young trainee integrates into the community and links with youth groups; schools etc. with an aim to help with establishing on going projects and to be a Christian presence within our local youth groups.

The trainee youth worker receives training, support and guidance (both practical and spiritual) from SWYM, who also meet with them on a regular basis and arrange training courses with their peers.

Some funding will be necessary from each Church, in order for this exciting project to go ahead,

Accommodation may be needed for the trainee, who will receive a weekly allowance;

Churches in Highbridge and Burnham would collectively and directly be investing in an individual who has committed themselves to working for God, for the benefit of the youth in our community.

Congregations within all our churches to be asked to pray about this exciting and very worthwhile project. You will hear more in the months to come.

**Action for Children
COFFEE MORNING
Saturday 7th November
10.00 – 12.00
Burnham Methodist Hall
Christmas Cards, Cakes, Raffle
Everyone Welcome**

BURNHAM METHODIST CHURCH

CHRISTMAS FAIR

NOVEMBER 21st

10.00am – 12.30pm

VARIETY OF STALLS:

Home Made Cakes – Handicrafts – Groceries -Chocoholic–

Bric a Brac “Christmas Raffle”

Coffee/Tea & Biscuits/Mincepies

Admission Free

In aid of the Church Redevelopment Fund

JAM FESTIVAL

Saturday 31st October

Burnham Methodist Church

Open for Public viewing from

11.00am. to 3.30pm.

Competitions, Local Craft Stalls, Jam Stalls,

Tombola and Raffle

Morning Coffee, Lunches and Afternoon Teas

Available

For Jam Festival Entry details, or to book a Craft table contact:

Ros Anderson on 783652

MOUNT ARARAT

The day started out so well. It dawned brightly, we breakfasted early and by 8 o'clock we were on our way.

Our trip notes said 'on a clear day it is possible to see Mount Ararat, legendary resting place of Noah's Ark...'

Exciting times. What could go wrong?

Our first visit was to an ancient Armenian settlement called Ani, 35 miles from Kars where we had stayed overnight. 1000 years or so ago it was a city of between 100,000 and 200,000 people, capital of the area in which it lay and often seen as an eastern rival to Byzantium. But in an area of conflicting powers it suffered several sieges and massacres before finally being destroyed by Mongol hordes in the 13th Century, and though there was some habitation for a while afterwards, the city was finally abandoned in the 18th Century. It has also been subject to earthquakes one within recent living memory which took away half of a derelict church that had been standing there. Still, there was ample enough remaining to interest us over an area that must have been one mile by two.

At the far edge of the site we looked down into a deep ravine at the bottom of which ran the fast running river Akhurian. And then up the other side of the ravine lay the country of Armenia. There is not a lot of love lost between the two countries and indeed after the first world war Turkey was forced to hand back Ani to the Armenians, only for it to be recaptured under the rule of Ataturk.

We returned to Kars and then swung away south up and over the mountains. Our first thought by now was for a picnic site for lunch. But it was cold up here and the sun had given way to cloud. So lunch was a hurried affair and it started to rain as we set off. There were still three or four hours driving and as the rain began to fall our hopes were that it would soon pass over. But it was not to be, and eventually it fell in Noah proportions. It was dreadful. Over there, said the tour leader towards the end of the journey, over there is Mount Ararat. All we could discern was wall to wall greyness.

We tried to suggest ways in which we could start earlier the next morning and come back to see the mountain before we moved off again, and the tour leader then did admit it might be possible to see it before we left. But that

seemed no consolation – we had not fulfilled the promise of the trip notes – 'on a clear day...' etc

We left the main road and turned left into the road in which our hotel lay. 17 disappointed passengers dismounted from the bus and trooped in out of the rain. Somewhere in the unseen distance Noah was laughing at us no doubt.

We were a bit quiet as we unpacked. But then half an hour later there was a commotion outside our room. Come quick, come quick, said a voice. We trooped out, onto the hotel balcony, and there before us resplendent in the evening sunshine stood the huge conical shape that was the dormant volcano, Mount Ararat itself. Unknown to us, the rain had stopped and the clouds had cleared away. The effect was staggering... and exciting.

The mountain stood tall dominating the landscape with snow right down to its lower levels. We stood transfixed. The day had been redeemed.

Harvey and Judy Allen

(In September, Harvey and Judy spent a fortnight touring in East and South East Turkey)



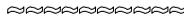
Dennis's Corner

A minister was planning a wedding at the close of the Sunday morning service. After the benediction he planned to call the couple down to be married for the Ceremony before the congregation.

But for the life of him, he could not think of the names of those who were to be married.

"Will those wanting to get married please come to the front?" he requested.

Immediately, nine single ladies, three widows, four widowers, six single men and an old man of 96 came forward.



Three ministers were discussing the problem of bats in the attic at church and how difficult they were to get rid of. The first minister said that his congregation had tried "smoking them out" but, they still came back. Another had tried poisoning them, but enough survived to repopulate the attic. The third minister shared his solution "I just baptised and confirmed them all, and they NEVER came back"



LINK VILLAGES' FELLOWSHIP

Rev. Margaret Trapp led us in our annual Dedication Service when we all made our promises and pledges for this coming year on Tuesday, September 22nd.

As we were not able to join Bournville for their Rally, we were very pleased that Rev. John and Mrs. Jill Stedman were willing to come to share with us their visit to The Gambia for the Celebrations as the Methodist Church gained its autonomous status. John gave a brief history of the Methodist Church in the Gambia where he and Jill had served as Missionaries. Jill told us of the schools and how they are flourishing after which John told of the Celebrations and the Service of handing over the Conference. There were several Dignitaries from our Methodist Connexion present as specially invited Guests. Jill concluded with a very interesting account of the Celebratory Concert in which most of the schools took part in singing and dancing. They had brought many artefacts - most of which had been gifts. John was wearing a Preaching shirt along with a Stole while Jill was wearing a shirt and long skirt designed by a lady from the Gambia and printed in Ghana. All the Dignitaries were similarly dressed. Everyone was most interested.

On Tuesday, October 27th. we are to have a talk and tasting from Wiltshire Farm Foods. Visitors are welcome.

We shall be pleased to welcome Paul Temple back on November 10th. to give us an update on the work in Luhimba, Tanzania. If anyone has any pairs of old spectacles which they do not need, I shall be pleased to receive them- a Tanzanian man has been trained to perform eye operations and these glasses make a great difference to those whose sight has become impaired.

Mrs Alison Crowther-Smith will tell us about Shibori Knitted Felt - A Japanese Art form on Tuesday, November 24th.

December 8th. will be our Christmas Buffet Lunch after which we shall see the Children from East Brent First School give their Christmas Presentation.

Eileen Goundry.

BRENT KNOLL

"All things bright and beautiful - the Lord God made them all, all good gifts around us are sent from heaven above, then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord for all his Love"

What a wonderful world! As we go forward to autumn, with harvest festivals, the beauty of nature - trees with green, orange, yellow and brown leaves we realise how grateful we are for our sight in enjoying all Gods gifts. We recall those who are unable to join us on Sundays, and remember them in our prayers.

We were pleased to welcome Andrew to our Church Council Meeting.

Our Harvest Festival was a happy family event. Andrew and Julie came, and the Church was introduced to a projector and screen. The service included a Quiz which kept us all on our toes! The service concluded with a "Bring and Share" lunch when we were able to familiarise ourselves with Andrew and Julie and them with us. With the sale of harvest gifts and donations we have been able to send £250 to M.R.D.F (Methodist Relief and Development Fund).

We have an empty chair in our Church. Bert was very much loved by us all, and we miss his handshake each Sunday.

With Christmas fast approaching our Christmas Coffee Morning and Sale will be on Saturday November 28th and we would love to see you all for a cup of coffee and some Brent Knoll bargains!

Shirley Pycroft.

EAST BRENT

Our Harvest on the 27th September was very well supported and Trevor Hunt helped by Anne presented a light-hearted very well conducted service with a difference, something we all need occasionally on a Sunday in our Churches, we all went away clutching bulbs? What sort you may well ask, well we now wait in anticipation of their growth to find out.

On Sunday the 11th we had Rev. Robert Channon and in the afternoon Rev. Carol Gill, chaired our Church Council meeting (we are now tagged on to Weston end of the circuit, where we were 45 years ago when Jill and I were married). This was the first East Brent Church Council for 12 months, and so certain business items needed to be agreed upon. We had an enjoyable afternoon, which is more than you can usually say about Church Councils. The business was completed thoroughly within the hour as East Brent is very efficient, and concluded with a selection of excellent cakes and tea.

New storage heaters are to be installed in the Church shortly and this will basically complete our redecoration of the property.

Rev. Carol Gill has been invited to be ‘Master of Ceremonies’ for ‘**Carols in the Barn**’ which will take place on the 22nd December 7.30pm at Ash Lawn Farm, Rooksbridge.

On Friday the 18th December 7.00pm will be our ‘**Carols by Candlelight**’ and on Christmas morning our usual short **Christmas Morning Service** at 10am. There will not be a Sunday morning service at East Brent on the 27th December. All of our collections over Christmas will be donated to the Luhimba Project.

Gordon Legg.

BURNHAM.

www.methodistchurchburnhamonseas.org.uk

STEWARDS COLUMN

Well it is coming to the countdown for Christmas very soon and it seems as if summer is now a long way off. We hope that everyone who has had a holiday this year whether at home or abroad had a good time and came home feeling refreshed.

I have just returned from a holiday in Turkey and whilst there we witnessed torrential thunder and lightning storms which we could watch coming in from the mountains and closing in on us by the sea. I watched in awe as the lightning flashed here and there and marvelled at the strength in this storm and realised more than ever how marvellous Gods work is. Despite man being able to go to the moon and all the advances that have been made it is only God who can control the weather and man still cannot harness the energy in an electrical storm.

Here in Burnham we are looking forward to the Jam Festival at the end of October which we hope will be a huge success. There will be a lot of entries so please come along and support us if you can.

As we prepare for Advent and Christmas with our new Minister we look forward to a new outlook and approach for this special season.

There are many of our congregation and the link who are still unwell and unable to attend Church. We pray that God's healing Spirit will be with them and that they will soon be well again and once again worshipping with us.

With love and best wishes

June, on behalf of the Stewards.

BURNHAM REDEVELOPMENT FUND

We need to raise £21,563 to cover the cost of the present scheme for redevelopment work on the property. The total in hand is £4,825.

We thank those who have raised money during October. We had a good evening with supper and the Magic Lantern Show which raised £200.00. The Fashion Show was good fun as some of our members helped as models! This raised £285.00 May be some of us have now bought new outfits.

CHRISTMAS FAIR

21st November 10.00am 12.30pm

There will be the usual variety of stalls, and we trust, some with Christmas Gifts! Coffee/Tea and Mince pies will be served.

We need more helpers so if you can help please let me know. Joyce.

YOUR SUPPORT WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

Planned Events

October 31st Jam Festival & Lunch

Joyce



I was sent the following and thought it might be nice for the link
Iris Hodgkinson

A Minute

It takes a minute to find a special person
an hour to appreciate them
just a day to love them
but an eternity to forget them.
Always make time to take that minute

BREAN

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

Steve and Lynn, the last of our summer regulars, left Brean today. We get an enormous boost from our visitors; it is such a pity that so many people who attend their own churches so faithfully during the rest of the year, opt to use their summer holidays as a vacation from church as well. Not so long ago we used to get as many as 30 or 40 in the main summer weeks, while nowadays we think ourselves fortunate to get double figures. Steve and Lynn and the rest of those that come, give us a great deal of pleasure. Both of them took a big part in the Country and Western week in Brean in October and came to chapel in full western rig, marshal's badge and all.

Today has also been our Church Council. Some people look aghast at a church having a Church Council on a Sunday, but our experience is that, in a village such as ours, more people feel able to share in the fellowship of such an occasion if it is held during the day rather than having to turn out in the dark of an evening. So it was a light meal after service and then, in that spirit of togetherness, for the Council consists of all members, we dealt with the business of the day.

And our main concern is our roof. Our quinquennial established that we ought to replace our roof very soon. We have had draft approval for doing so but now we must raise very much more than we have got available. We are told that there is little left in Circuit funds, so it must be out with the begging bowl for the £15,000 or so still required. Hopefully our applications to various agencies for grants will provide some of the balance.

The end of summer means the clocks go back. We hope you have remembered and none have had an hours wait for worship. We used to have to change the time on the clock on our Church tower by stopping it and then restarting it at the correct time (what a pain to have to be in the right place 12 hours later!). All very tedious, but it is the Parish's clock and the Parish Council eventually had the mechanism changed so that all the changes now take place automatically and without human intervention – such a relief!

Our joint worship with St Bridget's in November occurs on the second Sunday rather than the first, so that we can share in the Remembrance day service. The service starts at 10.55am.

Harvey Allen



WEST HUNTSPILL

Our premises at West Huntspill are used by a variety of groups during the week.

There is Worship on Sunday mornings when a group of members and friends gather to Worship God, we are joined on occasions by holiday makers and those passing through.

On Mondays during term time the St. John Ambulance Badgers and Cadets meet. They do an amazing variety of activities from First Aid, when sometimes you could be forgiven for thinking you had arrived on the scene of some major disaster, to creative and communication skills using sign language, radios and computers. Presentation and enrolment evenings are held twice a year when County Staff visit to enrol new members and to present badges and certificates.

On Tuesday evenings the Coastline Singers descend to rehearse their music ready to make a “Joyful Sound” at their various engagements in the community.

We all go 21st Century on Wednesdays with Computer Classes meeting, this adds another dimension to our activities.

Thursday the Parchment Craft Group takes over and produces a selection of gifts and cards.

Fridays and Saturdays are mostly quiet days although there is the occasional Coffee Morning or Craft activity taking place.

Please watch for details of coming events.

Christian Thomas.

Minister

Rev. Andrew Biggs, 28A Caernarvon Way. Burnham on Sea. TA8 2DQ

Tel. (01278) 782306

Editors

Cedric & Dorothy May, 6 Brightstowe Road. Burnham on Sea. TA8 2HW

cedric.may@btinternet.com

Tel. (01278) 784204

Web Sites

www.methodistchurchburnhamonsea.org.uk

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

www.brentknollmethodistchurch.com

**The Deadline for the
December 2009 – January 2010 “LINK” is
Sunday 22nd November 2009**

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Please contact the Editor if you would like one.**

If you do not have the ‘LINK’ regularly and would like to do so, please fill in the slip and hand to a Steward. or send to the Editor.

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