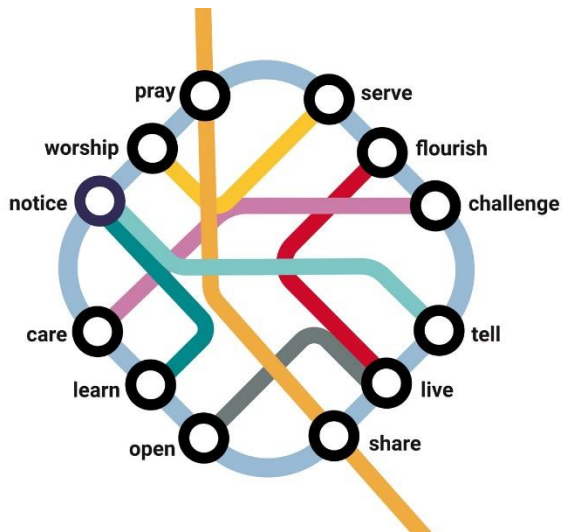


LINK PLUS++++

September 2022



Dear Friends

As many of the contributors to the magazine this month have mentioned, this is the start of the Methodist Year. 2022/23 has started

- New Supernumeraries are joining the Circuit (and we hope to have the opportunity to formally welcome them sometime soon) and we have said goodbye to Rev Shelia MacInaley as she has moved to Leominster.
- In response to the new Methodist rules, Brent Knoll and East Brent have joined together to form Brent Methodist Church, and Burnham and West Huntspill have done the same to form Burnham, Highbridge and Huntspills Methodist Church. The buildings are all remaining open.

- The Waffle Hub Community Café is opening on the 1st September in Burnham Methodist Church, we hope that this will be another part of our outreach into the community. Hopefully, it will link well with the Foodbank and the possibility of establishing other links with people and organisations.
- In the Circuit we are working hard to find a replacement for Gary and Angie but losing two ministers will be difficult in Weston-Super-Mare, and it will impact us too.
- The Methodist Way of Life continues to be the driving document for the Methodist Church's vision for the future and I encourage you, at the start of this new year, to dust off your copy again and pray about what God is calling you to do. The diagram on the front cover of this month's Link Plus give the 12 things that come under the headings of Worship, Learning & Caring, Service, & Evangelism.

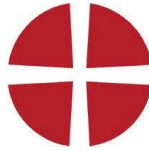
Please remember all these things in your prayers.

One thing for certain is that this year will be another year of change for us, and the things we will do this new year will mean that the start of 2023/24 will look different to us in ways that we cannot imagine now. Some things we will like, other things we will struggle with. Some things will resonate with our ideas about what church should be, others might challenge our notion of what church is, and what Christians ought to be doing. Nevertheless, as a band of different people, we are drawn forward together, bound together in Christ.

I end with some words of encouragement. These have been arranged into a hymn by Andrew Pratt (Singing the Faith 610) and are based on John Wesley's final words. The whole hymn is worthy of printing, but I have picked out verse 3 for us this month.

*Best of all is God is with us,
hearts are challenged, strangely warmed,
faith is deepened, courage strengthened,
grace received and hope reformed.*

Steve



Brean

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

The flags have come down this week. Streamer pennants in red, white and blue were strung up outside of the church to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee back in June, but after the event we said, why take them down, they add something to the place. So they have been up all summer, and we are glad to have left them there, even though they are beginning to look a wee bit frayed in places. We also hung out pennants in the colours of Ukraine to show solidarity with that savaged nation.

But Songs of Praise came before the flag lowering. A decent day too, not much sunshine but warm enough. Fewer than in previous years but good reasons for that and a Service well led by Steve (as we have come to expect of course). A fitting way to say goodbye to the main tranche of summer, as children start to self-adjust to the coming return (or start) of school. West Huntspill lent us their woollen scenes of the gospels from their Anniversary display earlier this year, to be displayed around the church. Several of the 24 tableaux were made by our own ladies, one by Milton and another by Marion Hance one of our Anglican friends, and the rest, of course, by the Huntspill ladies. Tea and home made cakes also featured at the end. Thank you to all for coming and especially to those who contributed to the displays and catering

We have had a reasonable summer this year, with congregations broadly in line with other years. It is good to see a procession of regular visitors, though disappointing that newcomers are less in attendance; perhaps they are too shy.

Sad to learn that a few of our combined congregations have suffered from Covid at the end of the summer period; we hope that all are well again by now, and that energy is back to full blast.

Now it is September, the start of a new Methodist year. It is nice to know that we have three (I think) new supernumerary ministers come to live in the

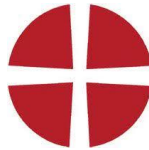
Circuit. Welcome to you all, we hope that you find joy in our midst and new interests to take up your time; it is often the case that this area is chosen to be nearer to family, so we trust that that all works out well too, if that is your reason to be here.

The new year gets under way with Council and committee meetings and foremost among the concerns is the change in staff appointments that are due next year; including the loss of one, perhaps two, ministers as Angie and Gary leave us next July/August. Our prayers for our Staff, Stationing group and even for the Connexion, as they wrestle with the implications of shortages in resources.

Those of us who attended the Bible based Zoom sessions over the last couple of years are looking forward to our new series after a couple of months to allow ourselves a time of relaxation. A look at John's gospel was the last suggestion I heard and a lively time of contrasting views will be heard I guess. I am sure that new members of the group would be welcome to join us. As we leave the warmth of our summer, we turn our thoughts to cooler days, and cooler days takes us to thoughts of how many people are going to afford the huge increases in cost of gas, electricity and oil; and for that matter food and all that is affected by the inflationary cost of living. Our thoughts and prayers then for the food bank, to all who will give, to those who organise and run, to those who need to use its facilities; and to innovative ways of caring and sharing. And to our government and its agencies that they will administer with due thoughts for justice, and care for those in need. We don't talk about them enough amongst ourselves, but I rather imagine that we are all thinking about the concerns of our nation over the next few months and even years. Our faith encourages us to see the way forward in and through the love that is God in our lives.

Enjoy the fruits of autumn. On the 9th October we celebrate Harvest Festival in our church alongside our Anglican friends. The fruits of our harvest are stored to provide our sustenance over our winter months and therein lies our hope. Judy's poem selection this month fits nicely.

Harvey Allen



Brent Knoll

Thank you to everybody who supported our four Summer coffee mornings to raise money for charities and local causes. We have been, quite simply, overwhelmed by the generosity of all those who have visited us during this time - our friends from the village and from around our Methodist Circuit and holidaymakers and walkers, who popped in for refreshments and a chat. I will let you know the amounts raised for each charity in the next edition of The Link.

Many, many thanks to all who have helped facilitate these mornings, from decorating the church with photographs of the life of the Chapel throughout the years, to making teas, coffee and delicious cakes.

During the Summer, we have also been so happy to welcome visitors to our Chapel on Sunday mornings - from as far afield as California! It truly has been a joy. And we are also so especially delighted to welcome Sue and Jim as members of Brent Knoll Methodist Church. We have been so grateful to Sue, who is a superb baker, and who brought in delicious cakes, not only for our coffee mornings but also to share after fellowship on a Sunday. And equally grateful to Jim, who is a skilled wood turner and donated much of his beautiful work to raise funds during July and August.

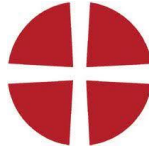
And thank you to Chris and Claraine for providing the best barbecue at the end of our celebrations.

After such a scorcher of a Summer, it seems very strange to be talking about Harvest Festivals - but we are looking forward to ours, which is being held on Sunday 11th September. Led by Brian Dallimore, we are hoping that this will take place in Claraine Clark's barn. It was such a success last year and made our thanksgiving for the harvest even more special. Claraine has kindly offered the use of her barn again. If the weather permits, please do come and join us at North Grove Farm, Burton Row, Brent Knoll, TA9 4BY. If the weather isn't kind to us, we will be holding the service here at the Chapel.

From all of us here at Brent Knoll Chapel, we hope you have all had a restful Summer. And at this time, we are thinking especially of all those young

people who are going back to school or starting a new school, college or university.

With blessings from all of us at Brent Knoll Methodist Church.
Rosemary Krull



Burnham

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

Happy New Year!

A greeting that is 4 months early? Not in Methodism, where churches work to a rather different calendar.

So, with September, Burnham begins a new year. As it starts, we have the opportunity to rejoice in what has gone before and to look forward to new developments.

As a church, over the last few weeks we've been delighted to welcome some fresh faces at worship and to see others who have been unable to attend in past months, return. Both enrich our congregation. We have also had the pleasure of receiving two people into membership. After worship coffee time is extra busy, bringing with it a chance to chat over a 'cuppa', or pray individually with a prayer partner.

Looking forward, we are now united with West Huntspill Methodist Church. Formally referred to as 'Burnham, Highbridge and Huntspill Methodist Church', each worship centre continues to function as an independent fellowship, whilst being administered as one Church.

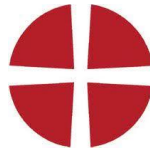
Covid has delayed the start of two other ventures.

Opening of 'The Waffle Hub' was postponed; it is now welcoming customers, after opening on 1st September.

Also delayed is the process of obtaining a new computer- projection system. As I write, companies have provided their expert knowledge and quotations for the project. No decisions as to type of display have yet been reached.

Eventually, we will not need to hope for a cloudy day in order to see pictures and videos during a church service!

Linda Patient for the Burnham stewards.



East Brent

Well, here we are at the end of the Methodist year and the start of a new one and possibly new beginnings with hopefully leaving the last few years of the pandemic far behind.

East Brent has felt the difficulty of the past few years losing faithful members and having to look at a merger with Brent Knoll etc. but our few remaining members have stayed faithful and worshipped regularly each week.

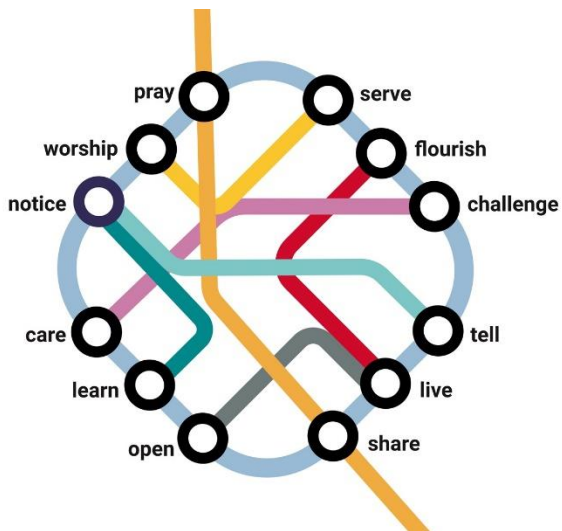
After saying that, we at East Brent have just cancelled our latest service due to many of us having Covid, illness or holiday, so we are hopeful most of us will be back for the last Sunday in the quarter.

We have had our quinquennial, also a meeting with Brent Knoll which leaves more questions than answers for some of us!!!

Our organ has been troublesome occasionally as some Sundays it has no sound and other times it is fine, good job we can turn to alternative equipment.

We have now had a car dumped in the car park, when it is removed we shall be considering locking the gates (what a pain). Latest update is that the car has been removed.

Our Harvests and Church Councils will be in the next few weeks which will remind us of the problems with the Ukraine Harvests and how fortunate we are in this country to be able to go about our businesses peacefully.
Gordon Legg



PLUS +++ POEMS, PRAYERS and OTHER MESSAGES

My call to preach

My call to preach. I first felt a call to preach when I was a student nurse back in the 60s. If I'm honest, it was probably more to do with congregations being so pleased to see a teenager in the pulpit than a genuine call. Many of the members could remember my great grandfather preaching in the circuit and were so encouraging. It was heady stuff. But it wasn't the right time. I struggled with preaching appointments, nursing studies, off duty and unhelpful ward sisters. Having had a long and very helpful talk with our Superintendent Minister, I decided to stop and wait and see.

Waiting and seeing took a long time. Marriage, two children, teaching in Sunday school, becoming a church steward took me into the middle 80s. When it came the call came dramatically. Tim and I ran the Youth fellowship Group meeting every Sunday evening. After Chapel, we had a lively group of questioning teenagers and they kept us all on our toes. One Sunday evening we were meeting in a large lounge and the chat was noisy and the discussions deep. I remember not being part of the group, busy at the other end of the room, not really taking any notice of what was going on when I heard loud and clear: "We'll have her preaching on the next plan!" What? Where did that come from, me? No way, I'd been there, tried that and it wasn't for me, or so I thought.

That night I couldn't sleep. The words kept going through my mind. Eventually I got up, found an A4 sheet of paper, drew a line down the middle, and on one side wrote reasons why. And on the other side reasons, why not. Reasons why took up one line. Reasons why not filled the page.

I spoke to our minister. Come with me on Sunday and do the readings and you will know whether it's right or not. I found that quite hard to believe, but he was right. As I read the Old Testament and the New Testament lessons in that service, I knew that it was of God that the time was now right, and that he was now calling me to the office and work of a local preacher.

My training took two years, 4 written exams and two orals at the local preachers' meeting. I was received onto full plan in 1987 and at my recognition service I received a letter from a supernumerary minister in our circuit. You may think you finished it said. But you have only just begun. Keep on studying. Keep on reading. Keep on learning. It was wise advice that I have never forgotten. Sometimes it's a struggle. Often it's a joy, but I can honestly say that I have never regretted answering the call.

Janet Widdess

The Waffle Hub Community Café

A huge 'Thank You' to the many people who have donated equipment, money, and time to the Waffle Hub Community Café to help get it started, and to the volunteers who have offered to run it. Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to you. The waffle Hub will be open from 9am – 5pm, initially on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Come along and enjoy a Waffle!

'Waffle is Conversation
Waffle is Food'

Liz Bennett (for the Waffle Hub Steering Group)

A poem chosen by Harvey & Judy Allen

Autumn fire by Robert Louis Stevenson

In the other gardens
and all up in the vale,
From the autumn bonfires,
see the smoke trail!
Pleasant summer over,
and all the summer flowers,
the red fire blazes
the grey smoke towers.
Sing a song of seasons!
Something bright in all!
Flowers in the summer,
and fires in the fall!

Thank you

Joyce Pipet would like to thank all who sent best wishes when she, then subsequently Stanley, contracted the covid virus. We have received flowers from known sources for which we've been able to thank people, but we opened our front door one day to find an anonymous bunch of flowers there. That was such a lovely surprise. So - if you read this - whoever you are - please accept our grateful thanks. It really cheered our day.

Finally, please note
the deadline for
the October Link Plus is

25th September.

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 |
| September | | |
| 6 th 7.30pm | Brent Knoll | Local Preachers Meeting |
| 10 th All day | Kingswood | District Synod |
| 11 th | Brent Knoll | Harvest Festival |
| 13 th 7.30 | Uphill | Circuit Meeting |
| 18 th | East Brent | Harvest Festival |
| 25 th | West Huntspill | Harvest Festival |
| October | | |
| 2 nd | Burnham | Harvest Festival |
| 3 rd 7.00pm | Burnham | Harvest Meal |
| 9 th | Brean | Harvest Festival & Lunch |
| 25 th 2.00pm | Brean | Link Committee |