
THE LINK

Methodist Link Churches Magazine

July - August 2012 Volume 47. No. 6.



BREAN



BRENT KNOLL



WEST HUNTSPILL



EAST BRENT



BURNHAM ON SEA

Minister's Letter

It has been an interesting spectacle recently watching two families of birds raising their young in close proximity. On our neighbour's roof, the seagull chicks are getting quite big now, closely watched over by their protective parents. Meanwhile, in the tree at the end of the garden, the crow family watch protectively over their young.

Mostly the two families keep to their own habitats but every now and then conflict flairs up, the parents shout at each other and fly at each other swooping low over each other's nests to intimidate. Sometimes they also bring in reinforcements and suddenly the air is full of circling, diving, squawking birds and even we humans have to run for cover! And then just as suddenly all is quiet again and the two families are back watching quietly over their offspring.

This spectacle has been entertaining to watch but less so is conflict when it takes place in human relationships, especially when it happens in the church – a community of Christians, the body of Christ. In fact, in this context, conflict can cut like a knife through the community causing hurt which then takes much time and effort to heal.

Negative and critical attitudes are a common cause. This can range from the occasional critical comment and put down to continuous and sustained criticism, even bullying. The whole atmosphere and ethos of the church can be negatively affected by such behaviour, which is also contagious. We need to guard against such destructive influences to ensure that the church remains what it is called to be: a community of love.

Of course no one can be positive all the time. But there is a vast difference between offering positive alternative approaches and options and simply criticising or putting down someone's efforts. My Grandmother had a saying: "If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all", which simply means: think about the consequences and the effect on others before you speak.

The apostle Paul in his letters to the fledgling churches of his time tackled this exact issue. To the church in Ephesus he said “As God has called you, live up to your calling. Be humble always and gentle, and patient too, putting up with one another’s failings in the spirit of love. Spare no effort to make fast with bonds of peace the unity which the spirit gives” (Ephesians 4: 1-3).

When I was a primary school teacher we tried to use praise and “positive reinforcement” to encourage a positive ethos in the classroom: “Well done for sitting quietly” worked much better than “stop talking” for example, because praise encourages and creates positive feelings whereas criticism and reprimand discourages, puts down and creates negative feelings. We also knew that any negative comment we had to make should be balanced by at least four positive ones.

Perhaps we can learn from this, that we get the best out of people by making them feel good about what they are doing, rather than making them feel that their efforts are not valued.

I’ll finish with these words from the letter to the Colossians 3: 12-15: “put on garments that suit God’s chosen and beloved people: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience. Be tolerant with one another and forgiving, if any of you has cause for complaint: you must forgive as the Lord forgave you. Finally to bind everything together and complete the whole, there must be love. Let Christ’s peace be arbiter in your decisions, the peace to which you were called as members of a single body”.

Let’s do the best we can to make our churches positive, loving, encouraging places to be.

Best Wishes

Revd Andrew



CALENDAR

JUNE

- Sat. 23rd 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Shoppers Coffee Morning
Sat. 23rd 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Safeguarding Course Burnham
Sun. 24th 10.30am. B/H **Church Anniversary** All age worship led by Rev. Russell Herbert, (Minister at Clevedon & Superintendent of the Gordano Valley Circuit)
Wed. 27th 2.30pm. B/H Prayer Meeting at Church. All Welcome
Thur. 28th 2.30pm. B/H Thursday Fellowship - Knit-in for Arthritis Care.
Fri. 29th 10.00 - 12.00. W/H Coffee Cake and Chat plus stalls at West Huntspill Methodist Church
Sat. 30th 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Shoppers Coffee Morning

JULY

- Sat. 7th 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Coffee Morning with Stalls & Raffle in aid of the Heating Fund - Stewards
Wed. 11th 12.30pm. B/H Church Lunch. (Ros)
Wed. 11th 2.30pm. B/H Bible Study Group All welcome.
Sat. 14th 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Shoppers Coffee Morning
Sat. 21st 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Coffee Morning in aid of Educate the Kids (in Kenya)
Wed. 25th 2.30pm. B/H Prayer Meeting at Church. All Welcome
Fri. 27th 10.00 - 12.00. W/H Coffee Cake and Chat plus stalls at West Huntspill Methodist Church
Fri. 27th Supper with Murder Mystery
Sat. 28th 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Shoppers Coffee Morning

AUGUST

- Sat. 4th 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Coffee Morning with Stalls & Raffle in aid of the Heating Fund - Thursday Fellowship
Sat. 11th 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Shoppers Coffee Morning
Sat. 18th 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Coffee Morning in aid of Educate the Kids (in Kenya)

Sun. 19th Last day for items for September LINK

- Sat. 25th 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Shoppers Coffee Morning

SEPTEMBER

- Sat. 1st 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Heating Fund - Wednesday Group
Sat. 8th 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Shoppers Coffee Morning
Sat. 15th 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Coffee Morning in aid of Educate the Kids (in Kenya)
Sat. 22nd 10.00 - 12.00 B/H Shoppers Coffee Morning

B/H Burnham, BR Brean, B/K Brent Knoll, E/B East Brent, W/H West Huntspill.



LINK VILLAGES' FELLOWSHIP

The AGM on Tuesday May 22nd was chaired by Rev. Andrew Biggs. Miss Evelyn Tucker, outgoing leader gave her report for the year.

The new leaders Mrs. Margaret Hicks and Rev. Margaret Trapp were elected. Following this Andrew led the Communion service.

Some members attended the Milton Ladies' Fellowship Rally at which the speaker was Rev. Ann Farmer.

We look forward to the start of next year's session on September 11th.

We extend a warm welcome to everyone on the second and fourth Tuesday afternoons at East Brent Methodist Church at 2.30pm.

Eileen Goundry.



Harry's Page (from his daily Bible readings)

BEARING FRUIT

BEFORE leaving this world Jesus took His disciples aside to prepare them for the problems they would face after He was gone 'I am the vine; you are the branches-apart from me you can do nothing. I chose you to go and bear fruit – 'Fruit that will last' (w5&16NIV).

Here Jesus teaches us two important things:

1) You only discover who you are in relationship to Christ 'Apart from me you can do nothing' When you forget that you end up trying to do things only God can do, like solving your problems your own way, or promoting yourself through clever strategies. You're not blessed in any endeavour because of your performance; you're blessed because of your connection to Christ unless you understand that, you'll waste your time chasing people who have no more power than you do. Your strength and success are in Christ, the Vine so stay connected.

2) *Before you get the fruit that remains, you lose the fruit that's temporary*, 'He cuts off every branch that...bears no fruit (v. 2 NIV). You can be a good branch, connected to a good vine, bearing good fruit, and suddenly God starts cutting back certain things in your life. Things you thought would always be there are taken away; now it feels like you're going backwards.

It takes faith to believe that God would permit you to lose what you're proud of and what you draw your security from in order to give you something better-fruit that lasts, enduring success. So, difficult though it may be, let it go. God has something better in mind for you.



**Wonderfully
Made**

Read

Psalm 139: 1-16

I will praise
you, for I am
fearful and
wonderfully
made

--Psalm 139: 14

When I was a child, someone close to me thought they could motivate me to do better by frequently asking me, "Why are you so stupid?" I didn't know how much this had affected me until I was a teenager and heard someone behind me say, "Stupid!" At the word, I quickly turned around thinking he was talking to me.

Knowing Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord helped me to realise that because God created me in His image (Gen. 1:27), I'm not stupid but am "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Ps.139:14). God declares that all He has made is "very good" (Gen. 1:31), and the Psalms remind us that we are "skilfully wrought" (Ps. 139:15).

The psalmist David describes how God knows each one of us intimately: "O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways" (vv.1-3).

Not only are we wonderfully made but because of Christ's death on the cross, we can also be wonderfully restored to a right relationship with God. "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation ... All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ" (2 Cor. 5:17-18 NIV). - Albert Lee

In His own image God created man,
He formed his body from the dust of the earth;
But more than that, to all who are in Christ
He gives eternal life by second birth. ---Hess

**Each person is a unique expression
of God's loving design.**

BURNHAM

www.methodistchurchburnhamonsea.org.uk

STEWARDS' COLUMN

Oh dear! Cedric has just phoned me to ask – “are you doing a stewards’ column for the Link magazine this month?” Grovelling with apologies my answer was ‘yes’ but I had completely forgotten all about it! Barry and I spent most of last week in the Lake District and with a big family gathering at the weekend for Barry’s “big” birthday, writing a piece for the link was the last thing on my mind.

Things have changed somewhat since I wrote the stewards’ column for the May “Link Magazine”. Stanley and Joyce have transferred their membership to Brean which meant that for a short time I became the only remaining steward at Burnham – not a happy prospect for everyone. (Sorry about the mixed verb tenses in the one sentence!) However, June immediately stepped back into the breach and I am sure we are all truly grateful. I am thankful that she felt able to continue her stewarding role while, for the time being, I continue as senior steward. We now have a rota of members of the congregation who have offered to take over the duties of preparing the church for Sunday worship releasing the steward on duty to “look after” the preacher. Working together with mutual support is a joy!!

Whilst we were in the Lake District (well almost – we were staying between Carnforth and Milnthorpe) we decided to worship at Arnside Methodist Church on the Sunday. I almost spoiled our arrival by very nearly backing the car into a rather nice 4x4 owned by one of the church stewards – he was very understanding!. The church itself had been renovated, rather like ours, with carpet and chairs and cream walls. The most striking thing though was the magnificent stained glass window full of the most glorious colours glinting in the sun- yes that round yellow thing we sometimes see through the clouds and rain. Every person who entered the church welcomed us – we were all (the 5 of us) made to feel really at home for the time we spent with them. It

was a service with communion and it was a pleasure and a privilege to share the sacrament with another community. Afterwards we had tea and coffee in the church hall – made and served by some of the men of the congregation. (Apparently the men always make and serve the after service beverages when it is a communion service. Beware men of Burnham Church – I’m having ideas about that!). I had known Arnside well as a child and young adult – holidaying there with my parents and then later with my own sons but had never seen the Methodist Church before. I really want to go back to worship there again some day. (The reason we went there at all was because Daphne Hill (one of our “Five go holidaying in Lancashire” – with apologies to Enid Blyton) met the organist from Arnside on a Nile cruise in Egypt 3 years ago. It’s a small world!)

So, back to Burnham. We had our spring fair at the end of May. It wasn’t as well attended as previous fairs due to there being other events going on in the town but we did make several hundred pounds and the proceeds went towards our heating fund. We are still awaiting confirmation of other grants to be able to start the necessary work.

It is our church anniversary on 24th June and we will be welcoming Rev. Dr. Russell Herbert from Clevedon to our pulpit and we are very much looking forward to that. I hope that the start of a new year for our church building will herald a new found strength of purpose and positive resolve for our congregation.

We are thinking of and praying for all those who are unwell and cannot join us in Sunday worship – particularly Beth Bridges and Joan Underwood and all those known to each one of us.

With every blessing

Ann Hall



BREAN

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

If we hadn't had a dog, we wouldn't have ventured out, but we thought we'd better do so, even though it was a cool day with a stiff southerly wind blowing sand the length of the beach. Somehow the wind gathered up the moist sand, dried it and blew it into mini dunes in the most unlikely of places. You could see how, given the right conditions, nature has the power to drastically alter features such as our coastline.

The queen must have wondered what she'd done to deserve the weather that rained on her as she watched the pageant passing her by on Jubilee Sunday. And then of course, with Prince Philip having to miss the rest of the weekend's celebrations, she must have had even more cause to wonder.

We at Brean had a good day that Sunday. It was our turn to host the joint service of the two Brean churches and even though very few of St Bridget's people were able to turn up, we still managed a congregation of more than 30 people. It was a very good and happy communion service that Rev Andrew took for us. And several of the holidaymakers also came to the coffee morning on the Monday.

I see that the Methodist Conference in Representative Session is on from 30th June until 5th July. It is the ruling body for the Church. I attended for a dozen years until 2005. That seems a long way away now and I agree it is difficult to raise much enthusiasm; but the Conference affects us all in some way, even if it is only in financial needs. So we ought to make an effort to keep up with its proceedings if we can. This year it is being held in Plymouth and visitors are welcome for most sessions. There is also a webcast for people to follow the debates live and they can be interesting sometimes – go on-line to Methodist Church and click the links to the Conference. You can even read the Agenda and reports if you wish but as this extends to 830 pages I don't suppose many will want to do so.

We welcome Eileen Craig returning to our area this month after several years in Scotland. It is good to have you back Eileen. We wish you well.

People who live on the seaward side of the village have, over the last few months, been attending various meetings and demonstrations about developments along our coast. In the first instance it was about coastal flood defences and how to prepare for rising sea levels and bad storms. More recently it has been about the proposed coastal path that is proposed around our islands, in our case extending the South West Path from Minehead to Brean Down. In both, the maintenance and stability of our dune structures is at the centre of the plans and it was reassuring to know that the coastal path suggested will use the beach rather than disrupt the dune pattern.

Well, the longest day has passed and as we enter July and the main holiday period we must hope that we shall get some warmer, drier weather, both to cheer us up and to ripen the crops and fruit. From us all here at Brean, we wish everyone in the Link a happy summer.

Harvey Allen.



BRENT KNOLL

What an amazing Jubilee weekend. I, sadly, couldn't make the Brent Knoll fete so missed the celebrations in the village but loved hearing from my friends what a wonderful weekend was had by all. I hate to sound like a typical "Brit" but I really don't think there are many countries in the World who would turn out in such bad weather and have such a wonderful time. And how many couples of Queen Elizabeth's and Prince Philip's age who could stand on a barge in cold wind and rain and still manage to smile. A job well done and something truly to celebrate during these difficult times.

At the time of writing I'm repairing the damage to my postage stamp garden caused by the "worst storm in 10 years" (a national paper's headline). My casualties include one lettuce, a flat packed greenhouse (which has now reverted to its original state) and a tomato plant. All in all, nothing compared to the storm damage in Wales so feeling very lucky but sad for our Welsh cousins.

As you will have read in June's issue, our church has a huge vacancy in our Sunday worship. Since Joan's retirement we are very lucky to have Heather organising our music. She navigates the complexities of our sound system with great aplomb. However, Heather will need a break and we would all love to find a volunteer eager to play our church organ each Sunday. Or any Sunday - if only once a month! If you would like to do so (and you would be so appreciated), please let either our Minister Andrew know or call me on 01278 751575.

On the subject of weather - remember the first day of summer was June 21st. So plenty of time left for us to enjoy the rest of the "summer". After all, "Somerset" means "The Land of the Summer People". And I'm honoured now to be part of that. No matter how bad the weather.

God bless,

Rosemary Krull.

PREACHERS FOR JULY – AUGUST AT 10.30am.

1 st July	Rev. Joyce Plumb (Holy Communion)
8 th July	Rev. Andrew Biggs
15 th July	Rev. Margaret Trapp - Songs of Praise
22 nd July	Mr. David Lee
29 th July	Mr. Ron Byatt
5 th August	Rev. Margaret Trapp (Holy Communion)
12 th August	Mr. Chris Luker
19 th August	Rev. Stanley Pipet
26 th August	Mr. Robin Jenks



EAST BRENT

At East Brent we have now installed the new sound system which incorporates the new loop system for the hard of hearing, if anyone is interested in purchasing the older speakers with the tripod stands (one speaker incorporates the amplification equipment) then please ask one of us at East Brent.

The Church activities are winding down for the summer, although Brownies continue for a few more weeks, so some outside décor will hopefully take place and also inspection of gutters and drains ready for our forthcoming quinquennial.

What a surprise we had a couple of weeks ago when in through the door walked a couple who just happened to be passing on their way to spend the day in Burnham and thought they would like to share in our morning service here at East Brent. We were delighted to see them and spent some time talking about how things used to be. How well they both looked and what they were up to now. Some people don't seem to change at all. The Rev. Terry and Jean Isherwood are just the same as when Terry was our minister some 35 years or so ago and it really was super to see them again.

The village of East Brent had an exhibition in the village hall displaying various happenings of years gone by and activities, amongst the display was various weddings that had occurred at East Brent Methodist and also photographs of Luhimba and Marafa Johns Orphanage the two African projects we donate to, it was one of the several events for the Jubilee weekend that was very successful.

Gordon Legg

EAST BRENT - Cont.

Holiday time is here again. Well actually we've just come back from ours – a short break in France to visit my sister and her husband in their new home. Keith has gone back to work, part time, and took over a small European Parish, in the South of France, just under a year ago. He is an Anglican vicar and his primary Church is in St Raphael, not too far from Nice.

A very mixed congregation gets an exceedingly warm welcome and you understand why when you attend a service there. Although nominally an Anglican Church all denominations and nationalities are welcome and the congregation regularly reaches between 80 and 100, some of whom are permanent residents, some who live in the area for a part of every year and some just visiting. Apparently the previous incumbent would go to the local markets and any time he heard an English voice would introduce himself, tell them where the church was and say that they would be very welcome at any of his services. The services are conducted in English but everyone is invited to join in the Lord's Prayer in their own language. I have to admit that I feel I paid more attention to listening to the other voices around me than I did to saying my own prayer on this occasion.

Once a week Keith goes to Grimaud and takes a service there, again in English but in the local Roman Catholic Church which he is allowed to use. This French village has an English Roman Catholic priest who used to be an Anglican and the local French community have taken him to their hearts (he apparently gets free breakfast in one of the cafes every day after Mass).

The third Church is in Port Grimaud and services are held here only during the months of July and August, in the height of the holiday season, because during the rest of the year there are few people around. The Church looks as if it is built on the water because it is surrounded on almost 3 sides by water, very picturesque. It is a very simple church but very attractive and is quite popular for weddings. A number of brides have decided to arrive by boat – there is a quay right outside the rear double doors of the Church and the bride literally steps off the boat and walks into the Church – I somehow can't quite see this happening in Burnham or Brean but you may know otherwise!

So, just a peep at an English vicar in France, which I thought you might enjoy. My sister, by the way, was brought up in the Methodist Church in Burnham, as was I, but had to be confirmed as an Anglican in order to be able to marry Keith! How the times change.

We enjoyed nearly a week of ‘wall to wall’ sunshine, feel refreshed and can now picture exactly where my sister and her husband are living.

I hope everyone going on holiday this summer will have a good time including the weather and the company which they most wish for. If you are not lucky enough to be going away, I hope you get the chance to enjoy some relaxation here.

Margaret Scott

Minister

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