
THE LINK

Methodist Link Churches Magazine

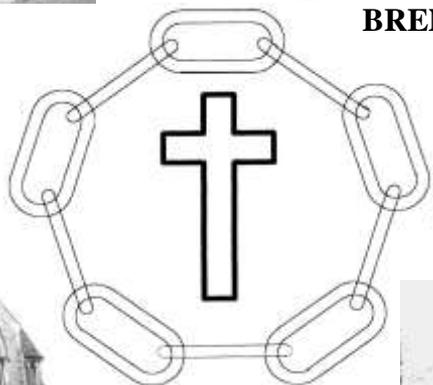
March 2007 Volume 42. No. 2.



BREAN



BRENT KNOLL



BURNHAM ON SEA



EAST BRENT



WEST HUNTSPILL

Minister's Letter

Dear Friends,

I have been asked to write the letter for this copy of the Link. I begin with my thanks for all the help and care you have shown me over the past three months from my hip operation. I am glad I am now moving around again even though sometimes with difficulty! Yes, I shall continue to need help and so it is also "Thank you" in advance!

We are at the start of Lent. The name Lent merely reflects the seasonal fact that at this time of the year, in the Northern Hemisphere, the days begin to lengthen and I guess we have already noticed this especially when we have had a sunny day! It is a solemn time beginning with Jesus fasting in the Wilderness before embarking on his ministry.

In the early days of the Church people abstained totally from eating meat, eggs, milk, butter or fat. In addition they were expected to avoid any food of which they were especially fond. There are some, and maybe you are one, who gives up something for Lent. A neighbour of mine of many years ago gave up sweets every Lent and gave the money to the Church!

The reason Christians take Lent so seriously – from the days of the early Church – is that Easter day is the highlight of the Christian year. We need to be prepared. As we think of how we prepare for the special occasion or celebration with planning, booking, arranging etc. so we prepare ourselves for the great day of Easter. We use this time to renew our spiritual lives so that with renewed hope and conviction we share the living, risen, presence of our Lord.

Into a dark world a snowdrop comes
A benison of hope and peace,
carrying within it a green heart,
symbol of God's renewing love.

Come to inhabit our darkness,
Lord Christ,
for dark and light
are alike to you.

May nature's white candles of hope
remind us of your birth,
and lighten our journey
through Lent and beyond.

Every blessing, Joyce

Cover Planned for Stephen's Sabbatical

For Pastoral needs the first call is on each Church own members contact the Senior Steward.

In more serious cases each Church should call on the following people in the in the order given.

In cases of serious emergency at unsociable hours the first call should be a member of the full time staff. |For all other matters of Church business the point of call is the full time member of staff and the senior steward.

Burnham

1. Joyce Plumb
2. Margaret Trapp
3. Terry Young

East Brent

1. Stephen Marr
2. Robert Channon

Brent Knoll

1. Margaret Trapp
2. Joyce Plumb
3. Carol Gill

Brean

1. Stanley Pipet
2. Terry Young

West Huntspill

1. Joyce Plumb
2. Margaret Trapp
3. Carol Gill



CALENDER

FEBRUARY

- | | | |
|------------|---------|--|
| Tues. 27th | 2.30pm. | The LINK Villages Fellowship - Rev. Karen Murphy
Weston Hospice |
| Wed. 28th | | Lenten Courses (House Groups) |

MARCH

- | | | |
|-----------|----------------|--|
| Thur. 1st | 2.30pm. | THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP - Rev. Joyce Plumb –
Home Missions. (SALES TABLE) |
| Thur. 1st | 2.30pm. | Brent Knoll Ecumenical Group commences Lent
meetings |
| Fri. 2nd | 2.30pm. | Women's World Day of Prayer Service at St.
Andrew's Burnham Speaker Mrs. Pam Grottick –
Chaplin for Deaf People. |
| Fri. 2nd | 2.30pm. | Women's World Day of Prayer Service at St.
Mary's Berrow Speaker Mrs. Pearl Hunt from
Churchill. |
| Sat. 3rd | 10.00 - 12.00. | Coffee Morning in aid of the RD Fund - Choir. |
| Sun. 4th | am. | Traidcraft Stall Burnham |

- Wed. 7th Lenten Courses (House Groups)
 Sat. 9th 10.00 - 12.00. SCF Coffee Morning and stalls
 Mon. 12th 8.00pm. **Monday Group** - Cinema / Theatre trip.
 Tues. 13th 2.30pm. The LINK Villages Fellowship - Rev. Piper from Brent Knoll.
- Wed. 14th 10.00am. LINK Communion at Brean
 Wed. 14th Lenten Courses (House Groups)
 Thur. 15th 2.30pm. THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP - Rev. Karen Murphy.
 Sat. 17th 10.00 - 12.30 Coffee Morning in aid of General Church Funds
 Mon. 19th 7.30pm. Circuit Men's Supper Club - Rev. Terry Young.
 Wed. 21st Lenten Courses (House Groups)
 Sat. 24th 10.00 - 12.30 Coffee Morning in aid of General Church Funds
 Sat. 24th 12.30 - 2.00 Lunch in the Burnham Hall - Tickets from Ros shortly.
 Sat. 24th 7.30pm. B. & H. Choral Soc Annual Concert at St. Andrew's Church
- Sun. 25th SUMMER TIME COMMENCES
 Tues. 27th 2.30pm. The LINK Villages Fellowship - Mrs Judith Champion - My Art Work
 Wed. 28th Lenten Courses (House Groups)
 Sat. 31st 10.00 - 12.30 Coffee Morning in aid of General Church Funds
- APRIL**
- Sun. 1st am. Traidcraft Stall Burnham
 Mon. 2nd 8.00pm. **Monday Group** - An evening with June Nethercot.
 Wed. 4th Lenten Courses (House Groups)
 Thur. 5th 2.30pm. THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP - Councillor Denis Davey - A year as Mayor at Burnham & Highbridge.
 Sat. 7th 10.00 - 12.00. Coffee Morning in aid of the RD Fund
 Tues. 10th 2.30pm. The LINK Villages Fellowship - Rev. Christine Nelmes.



Deaths

Mr. Wilfred Wright age. 102 Funeral Monday 26th February 10.45am. at Burnham Methodist Church.



DISTRICT PRAYER DAY

Sunday, March 4th, St Andrews Church, Filton

See last months LINK

2007 DAY OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY



The annual Prayer Day in the Methodist Chapel each January has become a popular event to members of all denominations around the area and this year seemed to be better than ever.

The theme came from Umlazi in South Africa - a place none of us had

heard about until this year. The programme was originally prepared for secondary school children to help them understand the causes and effects of HIV/Aids which has become so widespread in their country and it was adopted by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland as this year's topic. So South Africa became our focus for the day.

We were constantly reminded of that country, as a map of South Africa was used as a centrepiece, and its suffering there was touched upon in most sessions. But so was Healing, Renewal, Justice and Togetherness. As usual we were prompted in our thoughts by a rainbow of colourful displays supporting each session with flowers, candles and ribbons.



We came together from as far afield as Taunton and Bridgwater, Burnham and Weston - some sixty of us in all.

The leader of our sessions, both lay people and clergy, represented six different denominations. Among them were two firsts this year - a Quaker (Falcon Bell from West Huntspill) and a former Hungarian monk (Father Tibor, the new Roman Catholic priest from

Burnham)

There were thirty or more people at any one session. We sang together, we ate together, we prayed together and we shared Communion together.

This final service of the day was led by our Rector Rev. Geoff Walsh. It was only one day in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, but a memorable one. It really felt we were united.



Members of the Huntspill Prayer Group, who organised the event, thank everyone who took part - and are themselves continuing to pray, throughout the coming months, for the people of South Africa where it all started.

Margaret Waterhouse



Women's World Day of Prayer

The service will be held at St Mary's Berrow on Friday 2nd March at 2.30 p.m. It has been prepared by the Christian women of Paraguay and is entitled "United Under God's Tent" our speaker his Mrs Pearl Hunt from Churchill.

The service at St. Andrews Church, Burnham is also at 2.30pm, the Speaker will be Mrs. Pam Grottick, Chaplain for deaf people.



WHY YOU NEED THE CHURCH

..[THE] MANY PARTS AND ALL THE PARTS ARE NEEDED TO FORM A COMPLETE BODY.... 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12 TLB

There's a wonderful story about Jimmy Durante, one of the truly great entertainers. He was asked to do a show for World War II veterans. He told them he was very busy, but if they wouldn't mind his doing one short monologue and immediately leaving for his next appointment, he'd come. They agreed. But when Jimmy got on stage he went through the short monologue-then stayed, and stayed. Soon he'd been on stage 15, 20, then 30 minutes. Finally he took a last bow and left. Backstage someone stopped him and said I thought you had to go after a few minutes.

What happened?' Jimmy answered, 'You can see for yourself if you look on the front row.' In the front row were two veterans, each of whom had lost an arm in the war. One had lost his right arm and the other had lost his left. Together, they were able to clap, and that's exactly what they were doing, loudly and cheerfully.

That's a picture of what's supposed to happen in church: '...[the] many parts and all the parts are needed to form a complete body, so it is with Christ's body But to enjoy its benefits you have to go, and when you get there you must reach out to others so that you can know, and be known. Pew-sitting, back-of-the-head fellowship won't cut it! Someone sitting next to you has 20/20 vision where you have blind spots. You need their counsel, correction and comfort; and they need yours. When that happens, the church is working like it is supposed to. Our talents are gifts from God to be used for building his kingdom. We work better when we work together, coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success.

Sent in by Harry Kempson.

WOMEN'S NETWORK - HUMAN TRAFFICKING PROJECT

Women's Network, (working with a number of different agencies) are encouraging us to raise awareness of the problem. It is part of a campaign started in 2000 to raise awareness of the problem of Women and Violence. This culminated in a report presented and accepted by Conference in 2004. The Trafficking Project came out of this report.

Human trafficking is the third most lucrative form of crime in the world – after arms and drugs – an estimated £10bn annually: it is illegal: it is modern slavery. Millions of men, women and children in the world are forced to live lives as slaves. People are sold like objects, forced to work for little or no pay and are at the mercy of their employers.

Blaming poverty and inequality alone is not only inaccurate and disheartening, it tends to deflect blame from the key actors who perpetuate trafficking - the traffickers themselves and their customers.

Trafficking is NOT smuggling. The smuggled person pays a third party a fee to facilitate the journey and once the smuggled person has arrived at his destination, no further contact between the two is made. *Sometimes* trafficked people travel illegally, but mostly their travel is legal – the difference is the total lack of freedom. This is important in the tackling of trafficking. Authorities often assume that it is organised “immigration crime”. It is not. There are examples of nurses, agricultural workers, domestic workers who have entered the country with correct documentation but have been subjected into forced labour, most commonly through the removal of their documents.

Men and women and children are attracted by the thought of earning good money which will enable them to help their family – brothers and sisters, parents, the attractive package which is the offer of a good job, good money, good accommodation – freedom from poverty – which actually turns out to be a worse situation than you're in already because it not only does it not deliver – but it defiles you – it makes you feel worthless and even when or if you escape – you can never escape the memories. For many women, forced into prostitution who become infected with HIV/AIDs, the chance of a normal life has gone for ever.

People are approached directly by the traffickers with promises of money, well-paid jobs, and sometimes schooling or education. Sometimes people are recruited through agencies, which make the travel arrangements and obtain the proper paper-work. Sometimes the trafficker meets these costs and people are then pulled into a bonded labour situation. They don't have money to pay the

debt, they don't have their papers, and they are threatened with violence, deportation or arrest. We need to remember that these people are **victims** – they have committed no crime. The debt can start off at \$40,000 – roughly £20,000 – and is then inflated by interest charges, and charges for food and accommodation– there is no chance of paying the debt and the loan simply gets bigger and bigger and is also passed from generation to generation.

It is a Global problem. No continent is free of the crime and very few countries. It happens in this country. It affects men, women and children of any age, colour or race. It happens within national borders and across national borders. This is despite the fact that slavery is banned in most if not all the countries where trafficking takes place. It works because the trafficker is in control and because people welcome a chance to better themselves.

In Europe 1,000's of men, women and children are trafficked within the continent, from neighbouring countries, from Africa, Asia and former Soviet republics. They are found in agriculture, construction, catering and domestic work. They are often treated as illegal immigrants and deported rather than people with rights who should be protected.

It mostly affects women and children. It is assumed that girls are best suited to domestic work and for families who can't afford to educate all their children, there is the obvious choice to educate the boys – so when someone comes along offering work, education, or marriage it is seen as a wonderful opportunity for the girls. Women are often at a disadvantage too because they don't have the means or the access to independent travel – and so are dependent on third parties to make the travel arrangements. Men get trafficked into agriculture and catering – e.g. Vietnamese men into the UK to work in hotels; Nepali men into bonded agricultural work; Brazilian men into working on agricultural estates, children into many industries.

What can we do/what should we do?

There are laws, conventions and protocols but even when traffickers are caught these are seldom enforced. We can support various projects details of which can be found on these websites. Polaris Project www.polarisproject.org: Anti-slavery www.antislavery.org: Amnesty International www.amnesty.org.uk. We can write to our Councillors, our MPs, and our MEPs. It seems ironic that in the year we celebrate 200 years of the ending of slavery, trafficking, (which is slavery) is increasing.

Di Smart (District Project Secretary)



LINK VILLAGES' FELLOWSHIP

The New Year has brought its usual crop of varied illnesses, which has meant a few of our regular friends have missed two most interesting meetings.

Tony and Christine Castleton had no hesitation in braving the journey from Yeovil on 23rd January to tell us about The Living Paintings Trust, something we had not heard of before. Tony, a remarkably courageous and dedicated man, has himself been blind since his midteens and described how blindness has affected him. He now promotes this particular charity which sponsors the creation of tactile models of paintings, children's stories and other art works which accompany descriptive audiotapes and are offered to adults and children with serious sight problems. They are a delightful couple and very eager to spread the word about this very practical and life enhancing work.

On February 15th Revd. Margaret Trapp took us back to our schooldays, refreshing our memories of the tales of the very early missionaries who set out from Iona and founded the monastic settlement at Lindisfarne in Northumbria. Some of us afterwards recalled how at school, like these monks, we had to learn by heart complete psalms and long chapters of the Bible. Tradition does pass down through the years!

We look forward to a visit on February 27th from Revd. Karen Murphy, speaking on the Weston Hospice and Revd Piper from Brent Knoll on March 13th.

Do join us if you can at any meeting. We are a warm and friendly company and our varied programme aims to be devotional, entertaining and instructive.

Margaret Hicks



BURNHAM.

We are nearing the end of February and we have been very fortunate with the weather. The snow did not arrive in Somerset but I am sure the children would be very disappointed. However we did have our fair share a strong winds and rain. In many gardens the spring bulbs are already in flower making the gardens and parks very colourful. On March 25th we put our clocks forward an hour for British Summer Time.

By the time this copy of the LINK reaches you we shall have had Shrove Tuesday and our pancakes and Ash Wednesday. The Lent meetings began on Wednesday the 28th and are meeting as house groups

We have just heard of the death of Wilfred Wright at the age of 102. He had been a local preacher since 1931. He was always pleased to have visitors but it became more difficult to have a conversation due to his loss of hearing, though he could still talk well. He managed to live in his own flat until after he was 100, and then he moved to Uphill Grange Nursing Home. We can remember all he did in Burnham Church. We also remember all his family.

There are several of our church family not well and unable to get to worship. We remember them in our prayers and hope that as the weather becomes warmer they will be able to return.

Stephen has started his sabbatical. We trust that during this three months he knows that he remains in our thoughts and prayers

Dorothy - for the Stewards



NCH

The amount this year from the home collecting boxes was £590.00. This is an increase of £94.00. I am always pleased to have new box holder's.

For the first time this year we were allocated an in-store collection at Tesco. This was on 10th February and the amount collected was £300.00 There were 8 people who helped, working in 2's for a period of time. Thank you all. Also thanks to everyone who has helped in any way during the past year.

Dorothy May.



BREAN

I suppose the most talked-about subject at the moment is our weather. What a mixture we have had - snow one minute then lovely warm sun - then pouring in rain - then in the evening look out and see the stars and a full moon shining in a clear sky. The poor birds don't know whether it's winter, spring or summer. Yet through it all nature carries on giving us lovely snowdrops, crocus and daffodils and I have a lovely white camellia in bloom. Isn't nature wonderful?!!! And it's free. So no doubt in this new year we shall have days, when we shall have winter and spring and summer to deal with but what a relief to know we don't have to deal with it on our own - SOMEONE Cares.

In last month's report we heard about the signing of our new commitment between our two churches in Brean. The first planning meeting was held last week but unfortunately I wasn't able to attend so haven't had a full report yet but no doubt something good will come out of it. Like everything else we have to work at it and to give it our best and having done that - we shall be blessed.

We shall be thinking of Stephen our Minister now as he starts his 3 months break and we remember him in our prayers that he will be blessed spiritually and physically.

We send our best wishes to all our family in the LINK especially those who are poorly and the elderly and lonely ones - we do think of you and pray for you.

God bless

Lilian Stone.

BRENT KNOLL

As I write this I am told that Joan Latham, our wonderful organist has had her op in Musgrove and hopes to be home soon. It is always a concern when members of our church family are not well or suffering, my own experience last year, when my father died, is that it is a great comfort to know that others are thinking of you.

Sadly one of our members, Sybil Batchelor has died since the last link article. Sybil was a lovely cheerful person, our thoughts and prayers go to Ron and the family.

Our Church Council meeting will be held on Saturday March 3rd at 10.00am and Chaired by our very capable Margaret Trapp.

The Ecumenical Group commences Lent meetings at Brent Knoll on Thursday 1st March at 2.30pm. Non members are very welcome but please call Margaret on 760573 so a book can be ordered.

Ron Pycroft our property steward is well into the job now and we thank him for taking on this important position in the church.

Our youth groups are thriving with help from many parents but especially Jenny and Mark. The teenagers very much appreciate the use of the Chapel now that we can move back the chairs. We hold table tennis competitions and have even put up a badminton net. The Shell Club recently made some very good finger paint pictures, luckily without too much paint anywhere other than the paper. This reminds me of our son (age 5) drawing a picture, in Sunday school, of heaven with an easel and painting in the corner. When I asked him why he had drawn the easel he replied 'because God is an artist'. 'How did you work that out I asked'? He said, 'well you know. Our Father who art in Heaven'!

Best wishes to you all

Sue and Keith Cox

EAST BRENT

A minister friend of mine was approached by a young couple asking to be married in Church. There was only one stipulation. It had to be pretty quick. My friend, in his supposed wisdom turned to the couple and said "I know these things happen. I shall be glad to marry you and we will arrange for the service next week". The wedding was duly solemnised and after the reception, the minister turned to the bride and asked when was the happy day. "Oh" said the bride "there is no happy day. We are emigrating to Australia next Wednesday" We had a rather similar situation in East Brent last month when Luke and Holly were married. Except in this case Luke was off to Afghanistan. It was a very happy wedding. Few, if any, had any church connection and yet despite constant clicking of cameras and mobile phones, all seemed to enjoy the ceremony. I am probably being controversial but I wonder if we did not charge for weddings and funerals, whether they be church members or not, would this be more of an outreach to the community. After all, the minister is still paid his stipend and if church members cannot open the church for an hour a week, it shows little for their faith. Perhaps this might be a way of encouraging more couples to be married.

We were delighted that Rev. Stephen was able to chair our council meeting last Sunday. Apart from the usual fixing of dates and reports from Stewards and Property, concern was expressed about the future direction of the Circuit. We have four Methodist Ministers paid by the Circuit. One is almost permanently bound to St Martins, one is on Sabbatical and likely to be on sick leave, one partly responsible for Locking Castle, leaving only our Superintendent as the only full time Methodist Minister in Circuit. Worle is an LEP and yet we see little of the other clergy in the LEP taking services in any part of the Methodist Circuit, far less at this end of the Circuit.

We wish Stephen well as he starts his Sabbatical and hope that this time and his future treatment will mean a time of relaxation and a return to good health. We are delighted that Revd Stephen Marr will be our first point of contact.

When this Link Magazine is available for distribution, we will be in the season of Lent. This is a season for reflection and taking stock. It originated in the very earliest days of the Church as a preparatory time for Easter. In times past, the season of Lent was not terribly well observed by many branches of the Christian Church largely because it was associated with "high church" but it seems now to be becoming a more meaningful part of the Christian Calendar. I remember travelling to work in the early fifties and being puzzled by all the Catholics emerging from their Chapel with their foreheads covered in Ash. For some it means a time for giving up the good things in life such as alcohol, sweets and other types of goodies, but I would rather it was a time on focussing on what we can do to help our neighbours and the less well off in our society. Surely, during Lent it is better to feed the hungry than deprive ourselves of the good things in life.

David Craig.



WEST HUNTSPILL PRAYER PLUS

At 7 Grange Road West Huntspill every Friday 1.45pm for 2.00pm All welcome. We share the things that God has shown us about prayer then we pray together, finishing about 3pm with a cup of tea.

Janet Johnson



Minister

Rev. Stephen Hill, 28A Caernarvon Way. Burnham on Sea. TA8 2DQ
On a sabbatical until Mid May.

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Rev. Joyce Plumb

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

**The Deadline for the
April 2007 “LINK” is
Sunday 22nd March 2007**

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

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