



Blyth Valley Times

A Service of the Church for our Local Communities

February 2025

Volume 46

Issue 2

£1.50

(where sold)

Plough Sunday 2025



On Sunday 12th January, friends and worshippers from around the team gathered at St Andrew's Wissett to celebrate Plough Sunday. Everyone was in good voice as we sang, "We plough the fields with tractors", modern words to the familiar tune.

The soil, seeds and plough were blessed "God speed the plough!"

Many thanks to Veronica Mowat for leading the service and to Andrew Howlett for supplying the tractor and plough.

MP



Photos: G Kiddy

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BVTimes Contents

Page 3	Worship in the Blyth Valley in February
Page 4	Service details
Page 5	From the Rector
Page 6	Halesworth & Bramfield URC
Page 7	What has your Team Vicar been up to?
Page 8	Funeral Reports. Life Events
Page 9	Halesworth <i>dementia</i> Carers' Fund
Page 10	A Spectrum of Song
Page 11	Halesworth Branch Cancer Research Halesworth Library
Page 12	Mothers' Union
Page 13	From the Ringing Chamber
Page 15	Sparkles Nursery
Pages 16 - 17	Blyth Valley Churches Contacts
Pages 18 - 23	News from Town & Villages
Page 23	Eco Award for St Peter's Wenhaston
Page 24	February's FoSM Recital
Page 25	Church Mice Tots. Youth Space Update
Page 26	RSPB Bird Watch
Page 27	Kids' Page
Page 28	Family Events at St Mary's Halesworth
Page 29	FoSM Recital Review
Page 32	St Mary's Halesworth 2025 Events

St. Mary's Church Halesworth

WORSHIP WITH US ONLINE

[www.youtube.com/
@halesworthparish](http://www.youtube.com/@halesworthparish)

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR
YouTube
CHANNEL

February 2025 Lectionary**Sunday 2nd****Traditional Communion – Fourth After Epiphany (Green)**

Romans 13: 1 – 7 (KJV)

Matthew 8: 23 – end (KJV)

Holy Communion – The Presentation/ Candlemas (White)

Malachi 3: 1 – 5 (NRSV)

Luke 2: 22 – 40 (NRSV)

Sunday 9th**Traditional Communion – Fifth After Epiphany (Green)**

Colossians 3: 12 – 17 (KJV)

Matthew 13: 24 – 30 (KJV)

Holy Communion – Fourth Before Lent (Green)

Isaiah 6: 1 – 8 (NRSV)

Luke 5: 1 – 11 (NRSV)

Sunday 16th**Traditional Communion – Septuagesima (Green)**

1 Corinthians 9: 24 – end (KJV)

Matthew 20: 1 – 16 (KJV)

Holy Communion – Third Before Lent (Green)

Jeremiah 17: 5 – 10 (NRSV)

Luke 6: 17 – 26 (NRSV)

Sunday 23rd**Traditional Communion – Sexagesima (Green)**

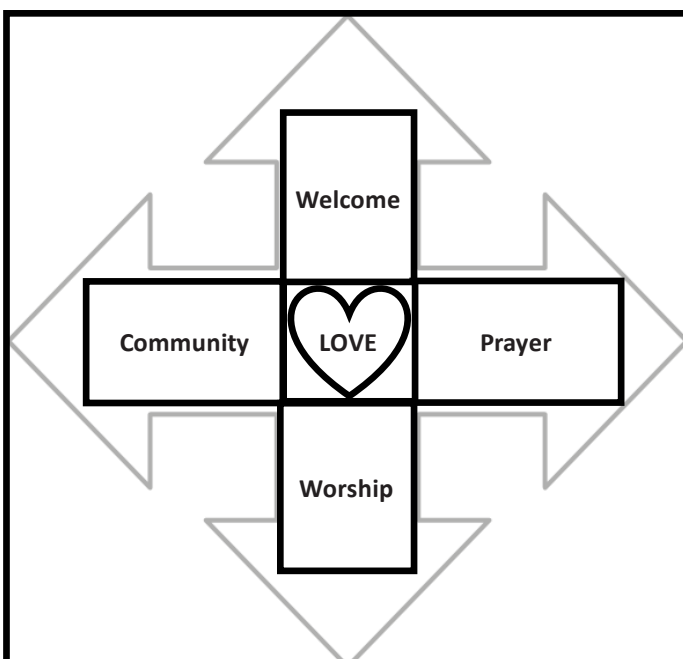
2 Corinthians 11: 19 – 31 (KJV)

Luke 8: 4 – 15 (KJV)

Holy Communion – Second Before Lent (Green)

Genesis 2: 4 – end (NRSV)

Luke 8: 22 – 25 (NRSV)



Worship in the Blyth Valley in February 2025				
CW – Year C Continuous	2nd Green CW – Presentation of Christ BCP – Fourth After	9th Green CW – Fourth Before Lent BCP – Fifth After	16th Green CW – Third Before BCP – Septuagesima	23rd Green CW – Second Before BCP – Sexagesima
Halesworth St Mary	8am Traditional Communion Dominic 10am Holy Communion Dominic	8am Traditional Communion Dominic 10am Breakfast Church Alison A and Pauline 6pm Evensong Dominic	8am Traditional Communion Dominic 10am Holy Communion Linda 6pm Evensong Dominic	8am Traditional Communion Dominic 10am Iona Worship Jason
St Peter Group				
Holton St Peter		10am Iona Worship David		10am Holy Communion Dominic
Wenhaston St Peter		10.30am United Service at Wenhaston Methodist Chapel		10am Pause for Thought Margaret B
Bramfield St Andrew		10am Holy Communion Vic		
Blyford All Saints			10am Wild Church Jim	
Thorington St Peter				10am Morning Prayer Veronica M
St Andrew Group				
Wissett St Andrew		10am Morning Prayer Alison C	10am Holy Communion Dominic	
Chediston St Mary		10am Holy Communion Linda		
Spexhall St Peter			10am Morning Prayer Alison A	
Linstead St Margaret		10am Matins Malcolm		10am Holy Communion Linda
St Michael Group				
Cookley St Michael			9.30am Traditional Communion Desmond	
Heveningham St Margaret		10am Holy Communion Dominic		
Huntingfield St Mary			11am Morning Prayer Vic	
Walpole St Mary				10am Holy Communion Alison A

Additional Services:**9.30am Thursdays, Morning Worship, St Andrew's Bramfield**

Wenhaston Methodist Church

Coles Lane, Wenhaston

Minister: The Revd Martin Keenan

FEBRUARY 2025

2nd The Revd Iain McKillop

9th The Revd Robert Soanes US

16th The Revd Clive Sutcliffe HC

23rd Mrs Sue Groome

ALL SUNDAY SERVICES at 10.30am
(unless stated otherwise)

ALL WELCOME AT ANY SERVICE

St Edmund King & Martyr

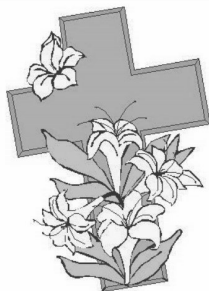
Roman Catholic Church,
Church Farm Lane, Halesworth

Father Christopher Smith

Tel: 01502 723207

Email: Christopher.Smith@rcdea.org.uk

Please enquire about our Service times and details



Morning and Evening Prayer

with the Revd Dominic Doble,
from Tuesdays to Saturdays
(Live streamed and later audio on Dominic's
YouTube channel).

From

St Mary's Church, Halesworth

In person, or join via:

8am Morning Prayer

Zoom Meeting ID - 883 5778 9092

Passcode - 607673

6pm Evening Prayer

Zoom Meeting ID - 850 0997 6304

Passcode - 825686

Halesworth & Bramfield URC

Minister: Revd Jon Sermon

FEBRUARY 2025

Sunday 2nd 11am Gathered Worship
Minister Jon Sermon

Tuesday 4th 10am to 12 noon Coffee Morning at
Lowestoft followed by Morning Worship

Friday 7th 9.30am Prayer Meeting in the Church and
Zoom followed by Coffee Morning

Sunday 9th 11am Gathered Worship TBA

Tuesday 11th 10am to 12 noon Coffee Morning at
Lowestoft followed by Morning Worship

Friday 14th 9.30am Prayer Meeting in the Church and
Zoom followed by Coffee Morning

Sunday 16th 11am Gathered Worship Judy Morton

Tuesday 18th 10am to 12 noon Coffee Morning at
Lowestoft followed by Morning Worship

Friday 21st 9.30am Prayer Meeting in the Church and
Zoom followed by Coffee Morning

Sunday 23rd 11am Gathered Worship Jo Moreira

Tuesday 25th 10am to 12 noon Coffee Morning at
Lowestoft followed by Morning Worship

Friday 28th 9.30am Prayer Meeting in the Church and
Zoom followed by Coffee Morning

MARCH 2025

Sunday 2nd 11am Gathered Worship
Minister Jon Sermon

Jon Sermon: 01986 873761 jon@sermons.me.uk

Judy Morton: 01502 724572

judy.morton@themortonpartnership.co.uk

Elizabeth Aslett 07710 916737

(for families and children)

familyhurc@gmail.com



The
United
Reformed
Church

Zoom Meeting ID: 776-044-1926,
Passcode 811885

Café Church Tuesdays!

Café Church is held on a TUESDAY morning
at 10am, via Zoom.



*For login details of how to join,
or to be added to the mailing list,
please email:*

The Revd Canon Alison Alder at:
revalialder@gmail.com

or

The Revd Linda Berry at:
revd.linda@huntingfield.uk

From the Rector...

Our strap-line is Church in Community and Community in Church. Indeed, that is one of the things that attracted me to applying for the post of Team Rector here in the Blyth Valley.

One of the ways in which I am quite a traditional vicar, is that I see myself as being a public figure: your priest. I would say that, whether you would say you were not religious, pagan, a church goer or only high day and holy days. Just as our Holy Communion is open to all, as Jesus taught at the feeding of the five thousand, so are our churches. They are your buildings whether you say you have a private faith, you use it for mediation, family research or a lunch stop.

However, I am acutely aware that in many respects, I am only a poor wayfaring pilgrim. These churches are only mine whilst I hold Bishop's licence as incumbent for the time I am here. I may love them, be inspired by them, be humbled by them, fed by them, for now, but they are not my parish church. Though it could be said that they really are yours if you and your family have been resident here since Doomsday.

I once worked for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds promoting the reserves and ideals of a managed coastal defence re-alignment project in Lincolnshire. European money, I think, was secured on the basis that one of two officers would be employed to promote the reserve to be created as part of the programme. That was the partnership's ambition. However, although they offered my line-management, the RSPB's internal policy was not to promote the exact same reserve as it had no facilities. I was caught between a rock and a hard place.

I am really excited by our new administration team - Annie, Carolyn, Pauline, Keith and Richard. I love their ambition to literally and metaphorically signpost all people to our churches. To offer parking, a sacred site, toilets, information, heat and light, merchandise, worship, local products, space, venues, books, clothes swapping, community, advice.


Once again, I am acutely aware that some, if not all, of these

themes may cause a stiffening of our shoulders, a tightening of fists, a sharp intake of breath as some react to their church being spoken of like this. It is perfectly reasonable to picture my church as empty of others. I may want to promote it as my reserved perfect building. That is how I know it. That is how I have loved, cherished and cared for it. I am reminded of the gospel stories of the long-serving labourers in the vineyard and the prodigal son's brother. They were unhappy that latecomers and the unworthy had as much access, as many rights, as they did. 'It is just not fair!' they sulk. 'Who are these people?' we may ask. Accusing that 'they only come for funerals and carols!'

We are caught between a rock and a hard place. So, it seems to me that some of us may have to be honest with ourselves and recognise, as must parents, teachers and coaches, that our child, pupil or trainee may outgrow what we can offer. They may end up needing others to support them as they develop beyond our capability. Our child may marry. The pupil move on to secondary school. The trainee may be promoted to another league. In like manner, if we want our churches to survive to speak to future generations, to be loved by them and be their sanctuary, we may have to - in our time - grieve that loss. Perhaps we have to have a grown up conversation and accept that it can be as difficult for the congregation member to welcome, as it is for the visitor to walk through the graveyard and force open the heavy oak door.

I hope that grasping that nettle may help some long-serving, faithful, valiant hearts understand their resistance to efforts to promote visiting and use of their churches. If that soul searching leads to us realising the gear shift it is too much to bear, please understand that it is acceptable to stand down or stand aside. I must say I remain eternally grateful to those stalwarts who have brought us this far. Yet, alongside that I am hugely excited at all that God has in store for us, more than we may ask or imagine, in the year ahead. Thank you all!

Dominic

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Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays
10am - 11.30am

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HALESWORTH & BRAMFIELD UNITED REFORMED CHURCHES

Revd Jon Sermon – Minister

Dear Friends,

Since Christmas and New Year passed church life continues with the new school term underway meaning the re-start of Open the Book, Toddlers and Messy Church. We have some new families engaging with us, which is exciting.

We have also had the 'bittersweet' experience of funerals including for two ladies, both of whom had a significant involvement in the life of the church.

The first was Jean Denmark, who died last November, aged 92. She had been well-known in Halesworth, not only at our church and with the Conquest Art Group meeting in our building, but also with the Volunteer Centre, Day Centre, Cameo Group and most of the tea shops and eating places. Even so, having outlived many of her contemporaries, and having been seen much less since moving into a care home in Beccles, the numbers attending were not that high.

Then came Pat Potts, who many of you from all the churches will have known. She was the instigator and most regular staff member of the Sign of the Fish bookshop. Pat had also led the Women's Aglow fellowship in this area, been on the committee of Churches Together and was our Church Secretary for many years. Her death in late December last year was such a shock to many. Pat had a large family, many friends and acquaintances and had been active in the life of the church right up to the end, so we were not surprised to have a packed building to celebrate her life!

I am reminded about the Apostle Paul's comments when writing to the Thessalonians about hope after this life: "We don't want you... to grieve like others who have no hope" (1 Thess 4:13). He goes on to explain the hope we can have for eternity in God's presence by trusting in Jesus Christ. When we celebrate the lives of such faithful disciples of Jesus as Jean and Pat were, yes our sadness and sense of loss are real, but tempered by the knowledge that they are with the Lord.

Blessings

Jon

Revd Jon Sermon,

Minister of Halesworth & Bramfield URC
and North Lowestoft URC

also Chair of Trustees: Romans 1.11 Trust



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make an emotional
time more bearable
and your care and
concern shines
through all you do."*

– from a family we have cared for at Rosedale



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What has your Team Vicar been up to?

Your Team vicar has mostly been recovering from Christmas which was very special this year. What with nativity plays, carol services (especially the All Access carol service, which is my favourite if I am allowed one!), quiet services and being in church on Christmas Day – I had a very reassuring notion of the

constancy of the Christmas message – God, love on earth, never changing. In the midst of all the trends and gimmicks around Christmas, the challenging news from around the globe and close to home, God's constant and unchanging love is always with us in all of life's ups and downs.

Other than being forced to rest up, I have been preparing for my retirement. Leaving well is always a challenge. When I first took up my post as Team vicar here in April 2022, one of the things I was most happy about was seeing no limit on my time here. Before this I had continuously been moved on every few years – first discernment, then training, then curacy. Then finally – a full-time permanent Team vicar post. I delighted in being able to look ahead, not rush into anything and take my time to see how I might best contribute to the ministry team and the local community.

As one of my favourite Psalms, 127, says "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain." Or a more familiar Yiddish saying "We plan, God laughs". I don't think that means God derides our plans, but that God exists at all times and in all places and so would be aware of things coming our way that we haven't a clue about.

I have had a wonderful time in ministry here among the Blyth Valley Churches. I have been so fortunate to make many connections, friends even, in different places and in different contexts inside and out of our church buildings.

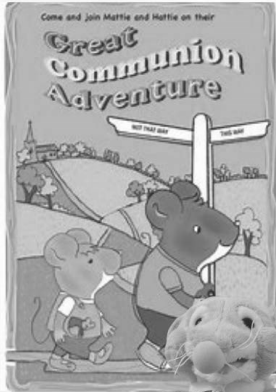
After just three years, I am having to retire. Much earlier than expected and I am sad about that, but I get the strongest feeling I am being called on to something else. It feels like a strange thing to say, but God can make great use of us in our weakness. Once a priest always a priest and I am very grateful that I will be able to carry on my priestly duties in my retirement.

I am not sure where and when that will be, but I hope will not be a stranger to the Blyth Valley. I'll save my goodbyes for next month's issue.

Until then, with love and blessings.

Revd Gini Williams

The Great COMMUNION Adventure



St Mary's Church,
Halesworth
Sunday 9th March
at 10 am

Family Service



Halesworth MEN'S SHED

**Open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
10am until 2pm
Saturday 10am until noon**

Well-equipped workshop at the back of Chinny's car park
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JOHN BAINER

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of John Bainer, who died on 3rd January 2025 on Southwold Golf Course.

His funeral service will be held on Friday 7th February, 11am, at St Mary's church Halesworth.

Afterwards at Southwold Golf Club. We would be grateful, for catering purposes, if you could let us know if you are attending please, but it is not essential to do this.

Contact: thebainers@btinternet.com

The service will also be available on a video link:

www.youtube.com/@halesworthparish

The funeral details will be announced on social media in due course.

Sue Bainer

Sylvia Foster

The well-attended funeral of Sylvia Foster took place on 13th December 2024 at St Andrew's church, Bramfield.

Sylvia had lived in Bramfield village for 75 years after she got married, aged 19, and was an active helper at village functions.

She was involved with the football club in the 1970's and Bingo in aid of the football, and then later for many other charities.

Thank you to everyone who helped and supported her with everything including the Bingo.

Thank you for the care she received at the James Paget Hospital and Cutler's Hill Surgery.

Also thank you to Woolnough's Funeral Directors and the Revd Dominic for the lovely funeral service, all the cards of condolences and to Bramfield Queen's Head for the excellent refreshments.

Donations raised £200 for the East Anglia Air Ambulance and £200 for the Pear Tree Fund.

Andrew, Mitsy, Philip and Margaret

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LIFE EVENTS

**FROM THE REGISTERS IN JANUARY
FUNERALS/INTERMENT OF ASHES**

Mark Hurren at Wissett

Archie Groom at Chediston

Elizabeth Hyde-Clarke at Chediston



**Rosedale
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3rd March 2025
2.00 - 3.30 pm**

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halesworth@rosedalefuneralhome.co.uk

This complimentary course welcomes everyone, no matter how long ago you were bereaved, or which funeral director you used.

Grief is the price we pay for loving. Everyone's experience of grief is unique and there is no right or wrong way to grieve. In this group you will find people who care - and understand what you are going through.

All enquiries either in branch at Halesworth Tel 01986 875588 or to the Bereavement Facilitator Lucy on 07753 299925



*"Beautiful is the
moonrise!"*

WALKING THE LABYRINTH
ST PETER'S CHURCH HOLTON AND PADDOCK
MONDAY 6TH FEBRUARY
2-4 PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT REVD
ALISON ALDER



Halesworth Dementia Carers' Fund

2024 was a very successful year, and thanks to all our wonderful volunteers and supporters, we are looking forward to lots of exciting developments in 2025. Our regular programme of events is now up and running again, and here is a quick reminder of what we have on offer:-

Mondays 11am – 12.15pm Seated Movement to Music at Holton Village Hall.

Tuesdays 2pm – 3.30pm Memory Café in the Co-op Community Room.

Wednesdays 2pm – 3.30pm Singing with Friends at Holton Village Hall.

Thursdays 1pm – 3pm Creative Art at The Cut.

Fridays 12.30pm – 1.30pm Seated and Standing Tap in the Co-op Community Room.

Fridays 2pm – 3.30pm Carers Support Group in the Co-op Community Room.

We welcome all people caring for those with dementia, and those suffering from dementia. All these activities provide wonderful stimulation, and greatly enhance quality of life, so do come and support us.

There are also regular film shows at The Cut. Always gentle family films, usually with a humorous touch, these are shown at the Cut on the third Wednesday of alternate months – January, March, May, July, September and November. Doors open at 1.30pm for a 2pm start, and admission is by £5 donation.

Golf Day

Last year we had a very successful Golf Day at Halesworth Golf Club, and we are looking forward to staging another one

this year. The date for you diaries is set as May 7th.

We are looking for people to sponsor this event and for teams to participate. We had such wonderful support in 2024 and if you feel you could help us this year we would love to hear from you. Please call John Giles on 07789 991046 for further information.

100+ Club

This continues to be a great success, with monthly prizes of £100, £75, £50 and £25. If you would like to join please call Anna on 07721 842802.

For further information on the work of HDCF, our various activities, and how to help us please call 07990 199632, email info@halesworthdementia.co.uk or visit our Facebook page.

John Wood

THANK YOU

I would just like to say thank you so much for my gifts, flowers, cards and good wishes on my retirement. I am really overwhelmed by your kindness.

My first month at home has gone by very quickly, they say that you don't know how you found time to work when you retire, and I'm beginning to see why!

Thank you again, and I hope to catch up with you all soon.

With love, Carolyn

x

PRADA

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Family Carers Support Group

Facilitated by
Halesworth Dementia Carers' Fund
Helping people with memory problems and their family carers

Charity No. 1170-477

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Co-op Community Room
info@halesworthdementia.co.uk

The Pear Tree Fund
In partnership with the Pear Tree Fund

InHarmony
Enriching music in worship

St Edmundsbury
Cathedral



A SPECTRUM OF SONG

A vibrant workshop for all who enjoy
singing music for worship

Saturday 8 March 2025

10am – 4pm

St Mary's Church, Halesworth

From Tallis to Townend – an enthralling musical journey through Christian worship music. Explore a wealth of eclectic styles, from the music of the early church to the vibrant sounds of today's worship. Something for everyone!

Led by Richard Hubbard
St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Music Development Director

Tickets £10 from stedscathedral.org/inharmony

THE HALESWORTH BRANCH OF CANCER RESEARCH

Cancer Research dates for 2025, Holton & Blyford Village Hall, (all the events are on a Saturday):

Jumble Sale, February 8th, 10am - 12pm

Big Breakfast, March 22nd, 9.30am - 1pm

Spring Fair, May 17th, 10.30am - 2pm

Jumble Sale, October 18th, 10am - 12pm

Christmas Fair, November 22nd, 10.30am - 2pm

We will also be in the i-Chameleon pop-up shop in the Thoroughfare from Thursday 3rd - Wednesday 9th July.

Our next event is our Jumble Sale on February 8th which is a little earlier than usual so we hope the weather will be kind to us. We will be serving tea/coffee and delicious cake and there will be a hamper raffle.

If you are having a declutter after Christmas please think of us. We would be very grateful of donations of good saleable items, ladies', men's and children's clothes, household linens, books, jigsaws, bric-à-brac, toys and accessories (shoes, scarves etc). I'm sorry, but we can't accept electrical items or kitchen knives.

Please don't leave items at the Village Hall, as we only hire it for the sale, please kindly contact me if you have items for us.

Our AGM will be in March, anyone can attend and you would be made very welcome. As we only know ourselves at short notice, the date, time and venue will only be advertised on social media so please check nearer the time.

Please continue to visit Jill our book and jigsaw lady at 19 Duke's Drive. Halesworth. She has an extensive and varied selection of both books and jigsaws to keep you entertained during the dark days. Donations also welcome.

Thank you very much for all your support in 2024.

We hope you will continue to support us and the incredible work carried out by Cancer Research UK.

The committee and volunteers are looking forward to extending a warm welcome to you all in 2025.

Please contact me if you need further information.

Dawn Davis (Chair)
01986 873640

'Feeling the winter chill? You're always guaranteed a warm welcome at Halesworth Library

Hot drinks are still available for everyone at the library, so please pop in to see us and we'll put the kettle on.

The Friends of Halesworth Library will be hosting a Quiz at the library on Wednesday 5th February at 7.15pm for 7.30pm. Teams of 4 - £12 (£3 each) and we will match up teams if individuals cannot fill a table. Participants should bring their own nibbles and drinks.

On Thursday 20th February at 2.30pm, The Friends of Halesworth Library welcomes author Ann Shearer for this month's book talk. Ann Shearer worked for The Guardian on and off for 20 years. Since then, she has been a Jungian analyst and psychotherapist, engrossed in stories people tell about themselves. Her books reflect these interests, from 'Disability: Whose Handicap?' (1981) to 'Why Don't Psychotherapists Laugh?' (2016). Talks and refreshments are free, but donations are always welcome.


If you have little ones at home, join us every Tuesday 10am-11.30am for our free Rhyme Time & Play session to sing fun songs followed by free play with our toys. We also hold a Time Out group for older people every Wednesday 10am, to make new friends and chat over a cup of tea. There are also two sessions of Sociable Sundays on February 9th and 23rd

10.30am-12.30pm and Board Games Cafe is February 24th, 2pm-4.30pm, both hosted and run by volunteers of the Friends of Halesworth Library.

You can find advice drop-ins from East Suffolk Council Customer services every Tuesday 10am - 4pm and Barclays Bank on Wednesdays 9am - 5pm. Citizen's Advice have a drop-in every other Tuesday 10am - 12pm, please ask a member of staff for future dates.

Did you know that the library can deliver books to your home? If you're unable to visit us at the library, one of our volunteers can come to you. Please contact us on 01986 875095 for further information.

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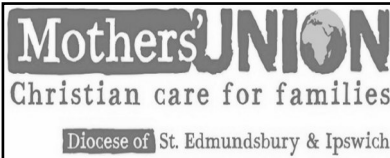


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Transformation Now! -
No 60.
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Happy New Year!

You have a new trustee board as of January 1st 2025

We are here to serve you, the Mothers' Union members. To ensure that everything that is done in the name of Mothers' Union, here in our diocese, complies with our objectives and to make wise decisions about allocating funds. Please pray for us as we take up these new roles.

Diocesan President: Jeanette Appleton

Trustees: The Revd Alison Alder, Ruth Dennigan, The Revd Alan Forsdike and Clare Thomas.

We still have some important roles still to be filled

We urgently need a Diocesan Correspondence Secretary. This is a home-based role and the person does not have to be a Mothers' Union member. Is there anyone in your church, family or friendship group who you know you be ideal for this role? Please pass on their names to Jeanette Appleton, email: jeanette.appleton@mothersunion.org

or telephone: 07768 418942.

We have an opportunity to work more closely with the three prisons in our diocese, but we need a **Prison outreach rep** to act as a co-ordinator between the prison chaplains and our members. Contact Jeanette (see contact details above) for more information.

The theme for 2025 is Join Us, Join In

At Council in November 2024 Mothers' Union members voted to help grow Mothers' Union here in Suffolk. They did this when they voted to introduce a new way of being part of Mothers' Union through being a Friend of Mothers' Union. A Friend of Mothers' Union, whether a Branch Friend or Diocesan Friend, is open to all those who declare their support for the objectives of Mothers' Union. This is different to a Mothers' Union member which is open anyone who supports the Mothers' Union's objectives and has been baptised.

A Friend of Mothers' Union pays the same subscription as a member, receives the Connected magazine and prayer diary, but they can't take up a role of an officer or vote at MU meetings. Who could you invite to be a Mothers' Union friend?

Upcoming events: Members' Day on Saturday 15th March.

Theme 'What does it take to be a grandparent of faith?'

This 'Grandparent Day' will be held at St John's church, Caudwell Hall Road, Ipswich IP4 5HF.

Doors open 10am with coffee/tea and cake, the programme starts at 10.30am – 2.30pm.

The day is for all grandparents and honorary grandparents



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED PLEASE

Can anyone spare one or two Wednesday mornings (from 10am - 11.30am) each month to come and help us at Waveney Foodbank in St Mary's church Halesworth, please?

If you are able to volunteer, please contact Gill on 07940 221054 or Pauline on 07758 489102

and will include worship, key speakers and small group workshops.

So whether your grandchildren or honorary grandchildren are pre-school age, primary school or teenagers, the aim is to help those attending to feel supported, encouraged and affirmed so that you can nurture the faith of the next generation. Because grandparents have an important role within their families, within their church and within our society.

The plan is to have similar events in North Suffolk and West Suffolk later in the year, so that all Mothers' Union members will have the opportunity to attend a Grandparent Day.

Lady Day Service and Commissioning of the trustee board, diocesan officers and branch leaders. Tuesday 25th March St Edmundsbury Cathedral 2pm

Do come to the Lady Day service on March 25th in the cathedral, when members of the trustee board will be commissioned, along with the all diocesan officers and branch leaders. **Banners can be brought to this service as long as they come with a banner stand.** Tea will be served after the service in the cathedral. The service will be live streamed via the cathedral website and can also be viewed in the days after March 25th.

So why not make a day of it, come to Bury St Edmunds earlier in the day to and try to spot other Mothers' Union members who you can chat to before coming to our Lady Day service.

Please remember these people in you prayers:

- ❖ For everyone taking up a new role this triennium, especially our new Worldwide President Kathleen Snow.
- ❖ For everyone who is continuing in their role in Mothers' Union.
- ❖ For our indoor members.

A poem for Diocesan members. It was written by me a few years ago and seems fitting to start my tenure writing to you.

January can be dreary, damp and depressing but then you spy a snowdrop, demure and bashful and somehow filled with hope for the year to come. May your January be filled with snowdrops.

An Epiphany – or something

I want to write something profound, WORDS to share around

For you to wonder at my wisdom, Ponder at my imparting
New Years bring new hopes, new dreams.

And yet it seems

We are still mired in the old, Can't shake off the cold
It's crept into our very bones, We shut the doors and hibernate at home.

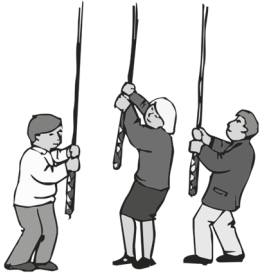
I want to write something hopeful
WORDS to cling to, Find a new tune to sing to
But January is dark navy blue

The colour of school uniforms, night and deep space
Going on forever, Growing blacker, Drifting further.

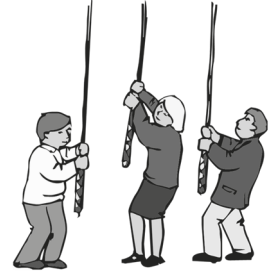
I need to write something cheery
WORDS to impress, Like a new designer dress
As simply stunning as a snowdrop
Perhaps overlooked
Often under-trodden
A light bright gift of hope – an epiphany
If you know where to look.



Sarah Nicholson



From the Ringing Chamber



Well, we survived the carol season, by which I mean we produced some pretty decent ringing for seven services in sixteen days, and given that three of those were at Halesworth that's good going for us. Included in the seven were two quarter peals, at Huntingfield and Wissett. Huntingfield bells go quite easily but are difficult to strike well due to the medieval clapper mechanisms (OK, not quite medieval, but 1720s mechanisms were still a bit hit and miss). Anyway, we stuck to the very simple Plain Bob Doubles and rang as well as could reasonably be expected. The same band (plus one) then rang the same thing at Wissett the following day and most of this was excellent.

The monthly quarter peal at Halesworth went quite well, nothing too complicated, Plain Bob again, but notable for the band containing only one visitor. More exciting was the performance, a few days earlier, of a "date touch" at Rumburgh, a piece of ringing comprising 2024 changes, to see out the old year. This took just over an hour, and apart from a little uncertainty at the beginning (some contrivance to achieve the right length which is not divisible by 12) the ringing was almost entirely error-free, until towards the end as tiredness set in and concentration wavered, but this was a good achievement and we felt we had earned our pint in the Buck afterwards.

Alex, our learner, is progressing well and just about managing the frustration that all learners feel when they know what to do and how to do it, but somehow it doesn't quite happen. I'm hopeful we may have another beginner soon – watch this space!

Learners need teachers, and fortunately the Association of Ringing Teachers (ART) runs some excellent one day courses on just how to do that. So it was that eight ringers from the NE District, plus two who had travelled a bit further within Suffolk, came to Reydon one Saturday in January to freeze to death for a few hours while learning how to teach ringing. Hopefully this will in time produce some support for Pete and myself who have shouldered the burden of teaching in recent years.

PJG

Stella @ KHG

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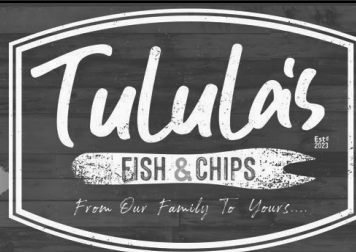
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Halesworth Volunteers - 01986 875600

There are collection places for Foodbank donations in
Chediston; St Mary's Church, Halesworth;
Halesworth Co-op; Holton; Rumburgh; Spexhall (2);
Wenhaston and Wissett.

ADDITIONAL FOODBANK DONATION POINTS

Donations of food for the Foodbank can also be left at Woolnough's
Funeral Services office at the entrance to Halesworth Cemetery on
Holton Road and also at Rosedale Funeral Services in the Market
Place, Halesworth.

There are collection boxes outside the offices, where produce can
be placed.

NEWBY BOOKS ON SALE

"THE CENTURY I SAW"

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£9.99 from Halesworth & District Museum,
and Halesworth Bookshop.

Proceeds to local charities.

"HALESWORTH STREET and PLACE NAMES"

by Derek Newby

£6.99 from Halesworth & District Museum,
Halesworth Bookshop and Heathside Stores Wenhaston.

Proceeds to Halesworth & District Museum.

"MEMORIES & STORIES OF OLD HALESWORTH"

by James W Newby

£7.99 available from St Mary's Church.

Proceeds to St Mary's Halesworth Regeneration etc.

"The LIFE and TIMES of DEREK NEWBY"

£9.99, an autobiography.

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and www.newbysofhalesworth.com

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Sparkles Nursery Become Eco Warriors!

The children from Sparkles Nursery at St Peter's School in Holton, recently joined us in the churchyard of St Peter's Church Holton. The children are becoming the very next Eco Warriors, helping us to not only work towards our Eco Church Award; but learning about God's Creation and the world around us.

This links fantastically with the Early Years Foundation Stage, learning about the world around them, and the EYFS area of Understanding of the World, looking closely at patterns, similarities and differences. As well as other areas of development; such as supporting the communication and language development as they built on their vocabulary to describe the lichen.

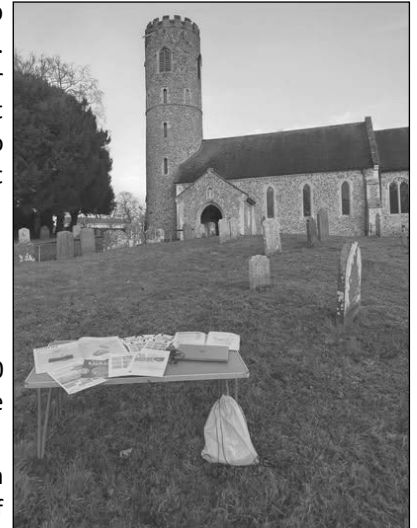
We had a wonderful time with the children, who joined us for two Lichen Workshops, one on January 14th and a second group of children on January 16th. It might have been cold weather, but that did not put off these fabulous Eco Warriors. We looked closely at the different patterns on the gravestones of the lichen, and all the different colours we could see. We categorised the lichen by crusty, leafy or shrubby and also by colour. We used different descriptive vocabulary such as powdery, fluffy, speckled and crunchy. We looked carefully at the photos and hunt sheets we had and decided we have a lot of white crusty lichen within Holton churchyard. Pauline, later uploaded our images that we took using the Zorb USB microscope unto the INaturalist website.

We also enjoyed a very lovely game of hide and seek in the

churchyard to warm up on a cold winter's day. Thank you so much for joining us, we cannot wait to see our Eco Warriors again next month!

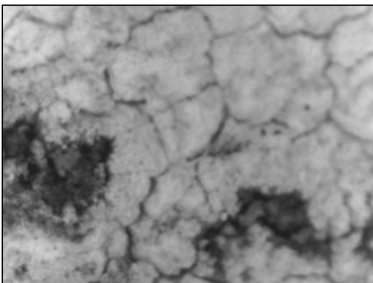
Lichen facts:

- ❖ There are over 2,000 species of lichen in the UK.
- ❖ Lichen is an organism that is a mixture of fungus and algae.
- ❖ Lichen can be found in churchyards in places such as gravestones, stone walls of the church and on wood, such as benches.
- ❖ They are keystone species in many ecosystems.
- ❖ They have the ability to absorb nitrogen directly from the air.



Cold day at Holton

Pauline Milsted



Common Lichen- Photo taken by children



Ready for the Workshop

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www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk**



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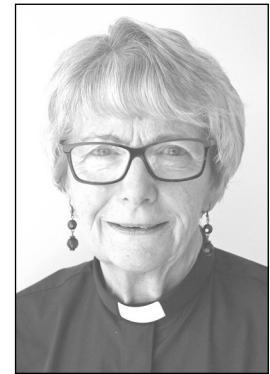
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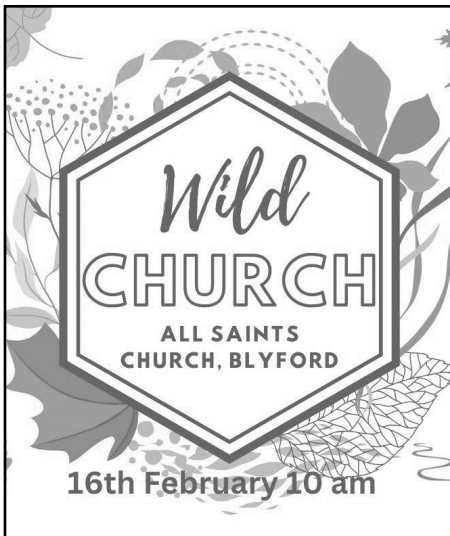
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News from Town & Villages

Blyford



Bramfield

Correspondent Alfred Mullett

snowmein@mac.com

Sylvia Foster

The funeral was held at St Andrew's, Bramfield on December 13th for Sylvia Foster who had died at the James Paget hospital on November 9th. The wake was held afterwards at the Queen's Head. It was a lovely service taken by the Revd Dominic Doble and 82 people attended.

She now rests next to her husband, Conrad, in the graveyard.

It was lovely to hear about her life here in Bramfield and she was a very kind, charitable wife and mother and helped greatly in the village over the years. We extend all our heartfelt sympathies to all the family at this time as she will be sorely missed. Donations went to the East Anglia Air Ambulance and the Pear Tree Fund.

Christmas Carol Service

We held a Carol Service on Sunday 15th December at the church. The Revd Linda Berry took the service and we had seven readings and also seven carols. The readings read, and carols picked, by members of our community.

Philip was the organist and Alfred played the harp at the end of the service. We enjoyed mulled wine and mince pies afterwards and it was a lovely service in the beautifully decorated church.

Jinnie Barham

Pat Potts

For those of you who may not know, I have been asked to pass on the very sad news that Pat Potts has passed away. The family wish to let everyone know that a service to celebrate Pat's amazing life was held at the United Reform Church, Halesworth on Friday 24th January. Pat was very active in all our communities and will be missed.

Donations, if desired, may be made to the United Reform Church in Bramfield and/or the humanitarian TEAR Fund.

Andrew Niven

December ends its cold grip on the land. But while the white of the frost lingers, a new beginning stirs and we have a special time to start anew with our lives, to begin again. Let us take each day a new step forward, a new beginning, and the one finite moment we all can make a difference to the world around us. Right now.

Happy New Year from Bramfield St Andrew's.

St Andrew's Church, Bramfield

has joined the "Give a Little" online donation service.

Details of how you can make a donation are on our website: <https://www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk/st-andrews-church-bramfield> or you can scan the QR code printed here using your mobile device.



Chediston

Correspondent Veronica Downing
veronica@veronicadowning.co.uk

On January 12th we held our first service of the new year at Chediston following our very successful Christmas Eve carol service. About 80 people attended the candlelit carols including children and teenagers, some of whom were our readers. A big thank you to everyone who made the service such a success and to David Bunkell who played the merry organ. Sweet singing was in the congregation with favourite descants soaring into the roof.

And... talking of the roof, it looks as if the recent winds have disturbed some of the slates and allowed ingress of water at the seams. Inspection of the roof has shown that it will need attention this year, so we are thinking of fundraisers that all the village can enjoy and be part of. That will include an inaugural concert, probably in the Spring.

Chediston's beautiful little church needs caring for so that everyone in the village now, and in the future, can feel proud that we have such an asset in our small community. The Churchwarden (Jo Wareham) and PCC would love to hear from anyone who would like to contribute to its well-being, from cleaning, arranging flowers for festivals, churchyard care, and even joining the PCC, and we welcome all to our Sunday services, usually once or twice a month, regardless of age or denomination.

There are no expectations; just a warm welcome and hot coffee and flapjack afterwards. If any readers are new to Chediston village and curious to explore the church or escape for a quiet moment, the church is always open, every day.

The PCC decided to do a second month circulation of complimentary copies of the *BVTimes* in January, so that every household in the village has received January's edition, with an invitation to subscribe, and so have a copy delivered monthly. Please contact me, or Jo, if you would like to arrange this. Subscribers have come forward already!

Cookley

St Michael & All Angels Church, Cookley

has joined the "Give a Little" online donation service.

Details of how you can make a donation are on our website: <https://www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk/st-michael-and-all-angels-cookley> or you can scan the QR code printed here using your mobile device.



Halesworth

Correspondent Jason Busby
01986 873336

halesworthparish@gmail.com

On Saturday 8th March, St Mary's is playing host to what is called *A SPECTRUM OF SONG*, 10am - 4pm, led by Richard Hubbard (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Music Development Director). A vibrant workshop for all who enjoy singing music for worship. From Tallis to Townsend – an enthralling musical journey through Christian worship music. Explore a wealth of eclectic styles, from the music of the early church to the vibrant sounds of today's worship. Something for everyone! The day will cost £10 and tickets can be purchased online

www.stedscathedral.org/inharmony

Anyone who wishes to come and isn't 'online' can book via myself. COME JOIN US – OPEN TO ALL ACROSS THE DEANERY AND BEYOND.

The funeral service for the late John Bainer takes place at St Mary's on Friday 7th February at 11am.

John was a well-known character around Halesworth for many years. He was involved with many organisations from the Halesworth Arts Festival, INK Festival, Millennium Green, and more recently as Chair of Governors at Edgar Sewter Primary School. At the request of John's wife Sue, the service will be broadcast LIVE via our YouTube channel which you can find at:

www.youtube.com/@halesworthparish

May John rest in peace and rise in glory.

Vera Ladds passed away on November 4th, a stalwart of our congregation and St Peter's Holton for many years.



During Covid, and since, Vera joined us regularly for worship 'online'. On

Tuesday 14th January, the Revd David Sochon led a service celebrating Vera's life at St Michael & St Felix Church, Rumburgh. We sang two wonderful hymns *O Lord my God, how great thou art* and *To God be the glory*. I played the *Benedictus from The Armed Man* by Karl Jenkins prior to the service concluding with the *RAF March Past* playing as we departed.

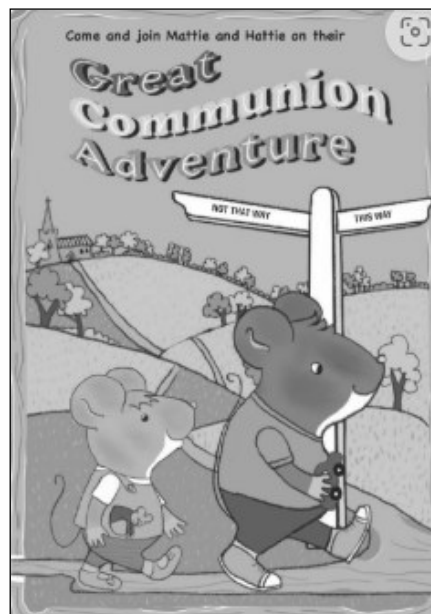
Vera led an extraordinary life and was full of fun and a very deep faith. Much loved wife of the late Ronald Ladds, mother to Sange and Julia, grandmother of four and great grandmother of eight. May Vera rest in peace and rise in glory.

The Friends of St Mary's 2025 recital season begins on Wednesday 12th March, with yours-truly kicking the year off with an organ recital.

Do put the date in your diary. With refreshments from 12noon and a 45mins (approx.) recital starting at 12.30pm. The BIG screen will be up for you to watch from the organ loft.

January and February are quiet months in terms of 'events/concerts' in St Mary's as we struggle to heat the building!

We have started to use a new resource published by the diocese called 'The Great Communion Adventure', starring Hattie and Mattie mice characters.



This booklet is a service of Holy Communion, suitable for all ages to engage in the liturgy of the church in a way that is accessible for them. "I hope you enjoy the journey of Mattie and Hattie in this booklet. Just as they are making a journey, I pray that you are able to travel with them and be

guided to learn more about God's love for you and to grow in Jesus' way, which is just the best way to be that you could imagine." - The Rt Revd Mike Harrison, Bishop of Dunwich".

Those who watched the service on January 12th, online, will have seen had 'overlays' on screen of Mattie and Hattie to make the experience more interactive watching online. We do hope you will enjoy this monthly service at St Mary's.

The Dean and Chapter of St Edmundsbury request the pleasure of your company at the Service of Farewell to Bishop Martin Seeley (11th Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich) Sunday 2nd February, 3.30pm. You will be able to watch the service LIVE via the Cathedrals YouTube channel.

www.youtube.com/@stedscathedral

St Mary's Church, Halesworth

has joined the "Give a Little" online donation service.

Details of how you can make a donation are on our website: <https://www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk/st-marys-church-halesworth> or you can scan the QR code printed here using your mobile device.



Heveningham

Correspondent

Jeanette Griffin 01986 798280
stmargaretchurch11@gmail.com

St Margaret's Church, Heveningham

has joined the "Give a Little" online donation service.

Details of how you can make a donation are on our website: <https://www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk/st-margaret-heveningham-with-ubbeston> or you can scan the QR code printed here using your mobile device.



Welcome to January 2025 and Happy New Year to you all.

Although it has been mighty cold recently, I have really enjoyed the cold snap with frosty mornings and seeing the sun again. Everything just looks so much better when the sun is shining and the frost makes for some lovely wintery photos. I've also noticed the first of the primroses showing their pretty heads.



It's not just the outside of the church that looks special during the winter months though. The lower sun shines through the windows creating a wonderful effect within. Our picture below shows the Revd Vic Hopkins after our service on Sunday and the beautiful patterns on the wall.



January also brings our thoughts to the new year and our hopes for what it may bring. For St Margaret's we will be looking at our long term repairs and hopes of funding. We hope to have some more fundraising events this year, which help us to show our commitment

and dedication to maintaining our beautiful building, this in turn helps us to secure certain funding grants.

Holton

Correspondent Jill Hewlett

01986 875913

jill.hewlett1@btinternet.com

St Peter's Church,

Holton

has joined the "Give a Little" online donation service.

Details of how you can make a donation are on our website: <https://www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk/st-peters-church-holton>

or you can scan the QR code printed here using your mobile device.



It is February already and the garden is beginning to show encouraging signs of life, despite the very cold weather in January.

A number of us from St Peter's went to Rumburgh church to remember and celebrate the life of Vera Ladds who died last year. The church was freezing, although we discovered that there *was* heating under some of the pews, we had sat in the wrong pew and got colder and colder.

The Revd David Sochon led the service which included Psalm 139; he also delivered the eulogy in which he gave a potted history of Vera's life, a life which was full and varied, and he corrected a misunderstanding that John and I had of what Vera had done during the war. She was skilled at using radar and recognising enemy aircraft, so not one of the young women pushing markers around a map table but someone who gave them the information they needed to do their job!

Vera had a long and happy marriage to Ron and missed him terribly when he died in 2017, but she was supported by her daughters Sange and Julia and her friend Rachel. We at St Peter's got to know both Vera and Rachel when they started to come to St Peter's, because our service started a bit later than St Mary's service, and for that we are grateful. They were both good fun and St Peter's benefitted from them joining our fellowship.

Vera was a very faithful Christian lady and when she could no longer get to church she would join the online services from St Mary's. The Revd David Sochon also undertook to take her communion every week, and did so faithfully until she died. One of the prayers that David would use regularly was this prayer of St Theresa of Avila which is so very relevant to us all:-

Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you, all things will pass away. God never changes; patience obtains all things, whoever has God lacks nothing. God alone suffices. Amen

After the service we all headed to the Huntsman and Hounds to warm up and to eat some of the very generous and varied range of refreshments. Thank you Sange and Julia.

Apologies

I realise that I didn't advertise either the RSPB Big Churchyard Bird Watch or the Taize Service and Workshop and Tea which were both on the last weekend of January. Apologies if you missed either of these events.

For your diary

The Labyrinth Event starts again on Monday 6th February from 2pm until 4pm in Church and on the Paddock (weather permitting). The theme for this month is "Beautiful is the moonrise". Do come along and enjoy a time of fellowship.

Remember to check services on page 3 of *BVTimes*; there will be fewer services at St Peter's after Gini has left, so if you don't check, you may turn up at 10am and find yourself alone!

Huntingfield

Correspondent Sally Clarke

sally.clarke@live.com

St Mary's Church,

Huntingfield

has joined the "Give a Little" online donation service.

Details of how you can make a donation are on our website: <https://www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk/st-marys-church-huntingfield>

or you can scan the QR code printed here using your mobile device.



Linstead

Correspondent

Malcolm Heath 01986 785289

www.linstead.suffolk.gov.uk

IN ADDITION TO A WEATHER REPORT as I open the curtains each morning, my wife now requests a road report: Is the road totally blocked, or just inconvenient? How many vehicles are there? Any dinosaurs? The latter request refers to our name for those strange earth-moving things with rather long, articulated Jurassic style arms. Very sinister, particularly as they trundle slowly past on the other side of a hedge. I have been reassured that all will be finished in a week or two. The enthusiasm with which they find new places to dig holes, suggests that such predictions should be viewed with a degree of caution.

IF I WERE TO SAY TO YOU THAT WE were to be visited by a rural caravan, you might envisage a brightly painted Romany equipe with plodding horse and an offer to tell your fortune, or perhaps a scene from 'The Wind in the Willows'. Well not exactly. The caravan is undoubtedly peripatetic and journeys around the countryside.

The Rural Coffee Caravan will be at
LINSTEAD & CHEDISTON
 LINSTEAD VILLAGE HALL
 IP19 0LB
 on Saturday 8th February 2025
 From 10.00 am to 12.00 Noon

Come along for some company and a catch up with your neighbours over a cup of tea or coffee with biscuits and cake. We bring a great source of information, should you need it along with the free refreshments.

We look forward to seeing you.
All Welcome! Charity registered no. 1187423

If you would like to know more, please
 email: info@ruralcoffee caravan.org.uk
 or telephone: 01379 855338 Registered charity No. 1187423 previously 1125748



But, instead of fortunes, it dispenses refreshments and helpful information. to keep us up to speed. No bad thing. We are all are looking forward to finding out what there is on offer - and to a cup of tea.

EVERY FIVE YEARS OR SO, WE ARE, AS A PCC asked to update our Electoral Roll. That is the list of those able to vote on matters to do with our little church. It sounds a little bit stuffy and bureaucratic, but it is important. Looking through the last list, it is

sobering how many of our number have moved away, or died. If you would like your name on the list (it is free and there are no obligations of any sort) or are not sure if you are on the present list, 'phone me or drop me an email and I will do the rest.

IN YEARS GONE PAST, WE HAVE taken out our little grey cells and given them an airing. Believe it or not, they have remained un-aired, thanks to Covid, for five long years! So gird your mental loins and join us for:



THE GRAND LINSTEAD QUIZ NIGHT

is on

Saturday 15th March at 7pm

at Linstead Village Hall.

Entry Fee £4 per person.

Teams of up to four.

£25 to the winning team

In aid of Village Hall funds

Light refreshments provided

but bring your own liquid brain stimulant.

To enter a team, please contact:

Pauline (01986 785347)

or Janet (01986 785289)



THE HISTORY OF LINSTEAD HAS NOT been without excitement over the years. It is within living memory that the last German aircraft to come down in Suffolk, came down at Grove Farm, Linstead Magna, a few weeks before the war ended. It had launched an attack on Metfield aerodrome, killing a USAAF sergeant, but crashed when it attempted to attack a returning B24 and was too low.



I was always under the impression that it was a lone raider, but the Parish Council has been presented with a tiny piece of the wreckage, together with more historical details.

It appears that the Ju88 had been part of a concerted action, codenamed Operation Gisela. Google has yielded more details: The raid involved over 200 enemy aircraft and they attacked returning allied bombers as they were approaching their home airfields. 20 Allied and three German aircraft were lost. It was the last concerted German night-fighter operation of the war. It is hoped to mount and display this little piece of history. The four German airmen who died were initially interred in Linstead churchyard and a memorial in the church records the fact.

SERVICES IN FEBRUARY COMPRISE Matins on the 9th and Holy Communion on the 23rd. Both services are at 10am.

Spexhall

Correspondent Keith Noakes

spexhallwoodpecker@gmail.com

(*Spexhall is thought to be Anglo-Saxon for 'woodpecker')

Facebook: St Peter's Spexhall and Spexhall Village Hall

St Peter's Church, Spexhall
 has joined the "Give a Little" online donation service.
 Details of how you can make a donation are on our website: <https://www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk/st-peters-church-spexhall>
 or you can scan the QR code printed here using your mobile device.




Candlemas and all that

Your Woodpecking correspondent was interested in the twittering of churchwardens on Facebook about Candlemas traditions. The feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple is on February 2nd, and many churches (such as a number in the joint benefices) keep their cribs in place. Some churches even keep their Christmas tree in place until this day. Ours looked lovely, and thanks to Fred Woods for providing it and watering it so dutifully through the season. However, Fred does remove it before Epiphany as keeping it going a bit longer would be a struggle, and visitors who don't know the Candlemas

tradition might be aghast that the tree is still up after Epiphany!

Thanks for all you do....

Woodpecker is aware that services and refreshments require preparation and help. Our thanks must go to all who cleaned and decorated the church so beautifully for the Christmas season, and to those from the congregation and the village who baked mince pies and cake for the Carol Service. It is always good to bring the wider community together for special times.

Midnight Mass

It always seems such a special holy night walking through the churchyard for Midnight Mass, and then homeward, having sung, 'born this happy morning'. It was very good to see our friends from Wissett at this service which we alternate with them, as well as other friends from the village and elsewhere. Our special thanks to those who provided funds so that we could have an organist. 'Live' music makes all the difference when accompanying carols.

Plough Sunday

We have begun a 'new tradition' in sharing Plough Sunday with Wissett. At Spexhall we have the old plough, and Wissett brings the modern plough as near as possible to the church. It is lovely to share this special rural festival, and we thank Wissett for a warm welcome and delicious refreshments. Spexhall's turn next year!

Normal Service Resumes

After all the excitement of Christmas, Epiphany and Candlemas it is good to have a time when we just celebrate life in its 'normality'. We will have a service of **Morning Prayer at Spexhall on Sunday 16th February at 10am**. As with all of our services, all are very welcome to join us.

Rejuvenation

It will soon be Spring and the time for some cleaning and sorting. At Spexhall we have started to prepare to rejuvenate the church. The roof of the tower has been in need of re-leading for some time, and the slate roof is in a poor state, as well as the inevitable problem with damp in the walls. We owe enormous thanks to our Treasurer for her dedication in applying for a grant to begin the work which needs to be done to keep our ancient church in a good state of repair. For updates, watch this column!

Thorington

Correspondent

Trish Gower 01502 478078

trish@coastal1.plus.com

Thorington Church was packed for the Carol Service on Christmas Eve and thanks to Jim, and all our readers and those who helped decorate the church, provide the mulled wine and mince pies... and £324 from the collection was donated to the World Land Trust. Again thank you to all for keeping our special church open and any thoughts for the future events to be held in 2025 please contact Trish. We are a very small PCC and will miss Roger and Rosie Wright who have moved away, thank you to them for their time given to church matters these last few years, and all good wishes for the future. Wishing you all best wishes for 2025.

St Peter's Church, Thorington

has joined the "Give a Little" online donation service.

Details of how you can make a donation are on our website: <https://www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk/st-peters-church-thorington> or you can scan the QR code printed here using your mobile device.



Walpole

Correspondents

Lee & Anita Hill 07713 450078

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St Mary's Church, Walpole

has joined the "Give a Little" online donation service.

Details of how you can make a donation are on our website: <https://www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk/st-marys-church-walpole> or you can scan the QR code printed here using your mobile device.



Wenhaston

Correspondent

Margaret Bloomfield

01502 478502

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There is not much to report in quiet January. It has been lovely to see the blue skies and crisp frosty ground. We are lucky so far in that we have come off lightly as far as winter is concerned. I hope I am not speaking too soon.

We are grateful to Arthur Musk who is arranging a Plough Day in aid of the church. We are praying for good weather and a lots of people. I will report on the outcome next month.

February Services

2nd Team Service at Halesworth 10am

9th United Service at Methodist Church 10.30am

16th Holy Communion 10am

23rd Pause for Thought 10am

WENHASTON M U

As is our tradition, we started the New Year with a Communion Service in the School Room at the Methodist Chapel and we were extremely pleased that The Revd Gini was able to lead this Service for us. We shall all miss Gini when she leaves us and our love and prayers go with her as she adjusts to different circumstances.

Next month we are making Christmas cards (for Christmas 2025!) for prisoners who will be in prisons in Suffolk during Christmas, we are making these under guidance using all the cards which we received this year! This is something which the MU in the Diocese has now been doing for many years and the cards are very much appreciated by the prisons.

We are all very pleased to learn that the Revd Canon Alison who is an active member of our Branch has recently been asked to become a Trustee of M U in the Diocese, and has accepted. Our prayers are with her in this new position, a job which we are all sure she will do with her usual caring, love and efficiency. **Margaret G (01502 478378)**

Wenhaston Walks

Just the one, local, walk in February. We will set off from Wenhaston Village Hall at 10am on Tuesday 4th.

If you wish to add your name to the circulation list, please email: ipbigwood@btinternet.com

Heather Phillips (01502 478545)

St Peter's Church, Wenhaston

has joined the "Give a Little" online donation service.

Details of how you can make a donation are on our website: <https://www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk/st-peters-church-wenhaston> or you can scan the QR code printed here using your mobile device.



Wissett

Correspondent Mary Pester
01986 835869

marypester@rocketmail.com

2025! It still seems like science fiction to me but maybe by February it will not seem so strange.

Looking back to early January our Epiphany Service with the church still decorated, candlelit and beautiful, was well attended. A happy celebration of the end of the Magi's journey as the figures were placed in the crib. Many

stayed for refreshments after the service and it was good to be with friends from across the team.

Thank goodness for our church heating! The night of January 11th was the coldest of the winter so far, so on the morning of the 12th, Plough Sunday, everything was frosted, the tops of the trees even crowned in white. It was so beautiful in the sunshine but very chilly.

January can seem much longer than 31 days and can be a difficult time. We think especially for those facing the new year in grief and mourning the loss of a loved one. May we offer support and comfort in any way we can. The church is open each day with a quiet place for prayer and thought, to sit, to light a candle. Sometimes it helps to have a special, quiet place to come to.

At Candlemas, on February 2nd, the crib figures will be placed safely away in the secret storage place until we get ready for Christmas 2025.

We have services on February 9th for Morning Prayer and February 16th for Holy Communion. Both at 10am as usual.

Looking further ahead we hope to have our Clipping of the church on

March 4th. More on this next month!

By the time this is printed it surely will be light at 5pm. I may not need the torch as I go to lock the church with my feline friend each evening. Snowdrops may be flowering in the churchyard. Robins may be singing. So let us be of good cheer as we journey through the year together.

St Andrew's Church, Wissett

has joined the "Give a Little" online donation service.

Details of how you can make a donation are on our website: <https://www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk/st-andrews-church-wissett> or you can scan the QR code printed here using your mobile device.



St Peter's Church Wenhaston Receives Silver Eco Church Award

We are super excited to announce that St Peter's Church in Wenhaston is the seventh of the Blyth Valley Churches to receive their Eco Church Award. Not only did they work incredibly hard, they managed to earn a silver Eco Church Award. This is such an amazing achievement and shows the commitment the Wenhaston church has to supporting the care for God's Acre through their worship and teaching, management of building and the land, community and global engagement and lifestyle.

Here is what the Revd Canon Alison Alder has to say about what Wenhaston has done to help them achieve the award in the area of worship and teaching:

"Regular assemblies at our village primary school have focused on climate justice and global citizenship, using materials from Christian Aid to look at pollution, water use and the impact of climate change in Burundi. Our church is part of a benefice which has hosted two Climate Action Conferences. Each of these have included services for Creation, this year focusing on Land Use and Food. Members of our congregation have been involved in these conferences and attended the services. We have a Creation Service every two months as part of our regular worship. In Lent last year, our branch of the Mothers' Union hosted a

talk about our link diocese Kagera in Tanzania and raised money for the Bishops' Lent Appeal for communities there." Partnership working with other community groups has been a vital part of the commitment of Wenhaston church achieving the Eco Church award, such as working with the local primary school, conservation groups, hosting a moth breakfast, working with the Wenhaston Common Group, Halesworth ASH, and other churches within the Benefice. If you would like to find out more about our commitment across the Blyth Valley Churches, please scan the QR code below and head over to our environmental stewardship page on the website.

PM



Environmental Stewardship



Friends of St Mary's · Halesworth
Arms of The Argentines · Mediaeval Benefactors

2025 LUNCHTIME RECITAL SERIES

WEDNESDAY 12TH
MARCH 12.30PM

Organ Recital
given by Jason Busby



Light refreshments served from 12noon or
bring your own picnic lunch

Free admission with retiring collection for the
Regeneration of St. Mary's Church
Contactless giving available

Church Mice Tots

Church Mice Tots continues to run on a Thursday in St Mary's Halesworth, from 11.30am till 1pm.

We have a lovely group of parents and children and we continue to welcome new families. It is amazing to meet the new people and continue to connect with each other and be part of the journey.

We hope we continue to build and flourish relationships that will last for many years.

Please note that in February half-term (20th February) we will not be running Church Mice Tots, but instead will be having a toy exchange and family picnic. There will be a baby/tots zone at the family picnic, as well as some older children so we hope to see you there.

Pauline Milsted



Youth Space Update

We have run our first term of Youth Space. It has been an interesting process as we have gone through setting up the space and thinking about what the young people of Halesworth may like and building connections. Unfortunately, we have not had the numbers we have hoped for; although we have had one lovely regular attendee who has been fantastic to connect with and is now connecting with the Apollo Youth Centre.

We have decided that we are going to temporarily pause Youth Space on Monday nights, as the youth at the moment are just not around. But we will be responsive to if a need or issues arise and have all the equipment and wonderful volunteers primed and ready to jump back in. What we have noticed is that the youth do come in more at other times of the day/early evening and know now more that they can come in play the piano or even help themselves to a drink.

Our plan is to make the youth corner a little bit more cosy and comfy, with a rug and some games, craft bits, some youth focused books, a bin, perhaps a coffee table and we will add more to their board.

We also will be running some special events, over the next few months to keep our profile up these will be:

- Monday 3rd March from 6.30pm till 8.30pm - A Pancake Extravaganza 12-18 year olds**
- Monday 12th May from 6.30pm till 8.30pm - Barbecue in the Arboretum 12-18 year olds**
- Monday 9th June from 6.30pm till 8.30pm - Pizza Party in Arboretum 12-18 year olds**

We look forward to seeing what happens next!

Pauline Milsted





RSPB



Big Churchyard Bird Watch!

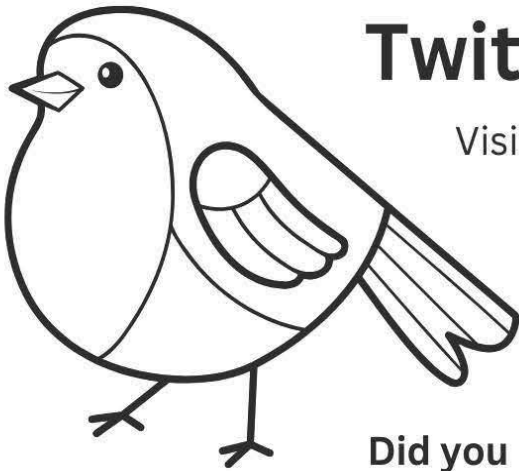
**St Peter's Church, Holton
25th January 2025 from 2-4 pm**



All welcome:
Join us as we complete surveys, have information about birds, craft activities, bird feeder making and refreshments.



KIDS PAGE

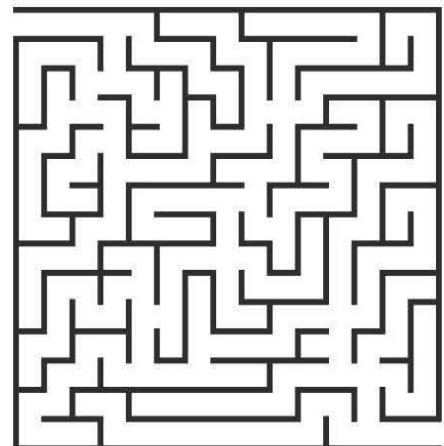
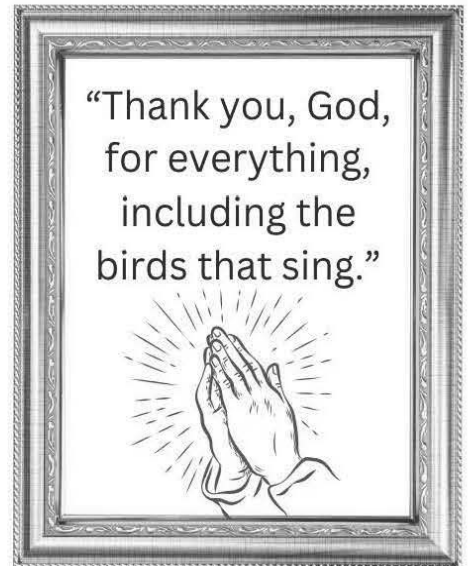
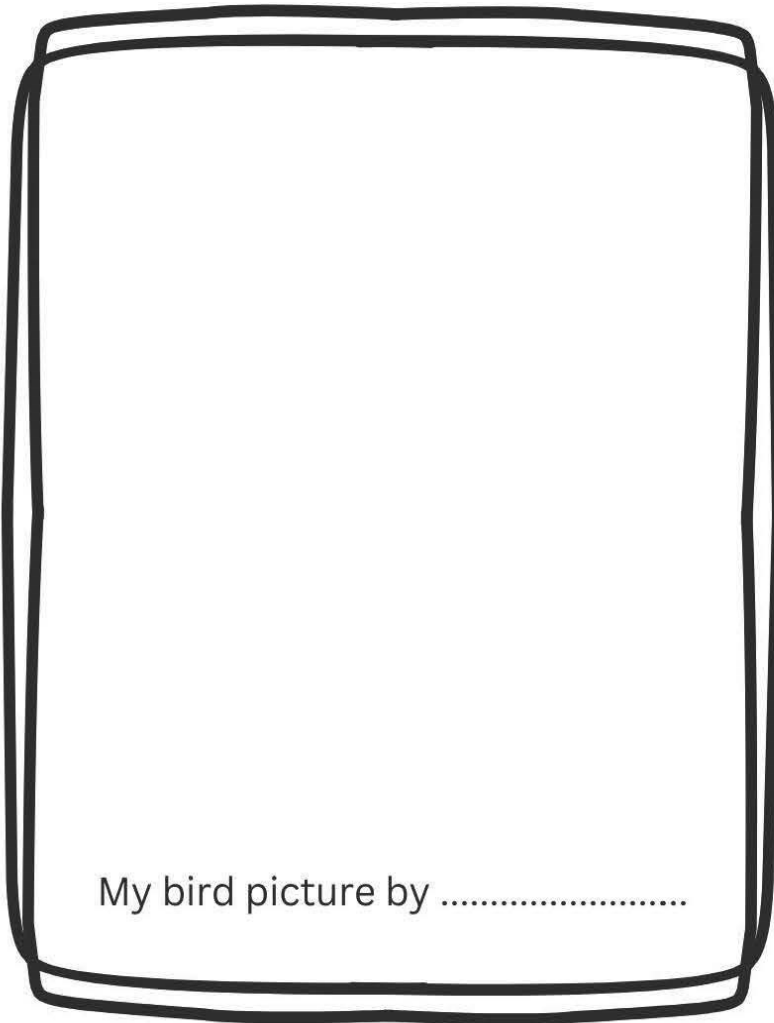


Twit-too-woo

Visit any of our churchyards and see what birds you can see!

Don't forget the Big Churchyard Birdwatch at St Peter's Church Holton on 25th January 2-4 pm.

Did you know? You can often find a Buzzard in Holton churchyard.



Send in your bird pictures you have drawn to pauline@growingtogetherearlyyears.co.uk

FAMILY EVENTS AT ST MARY'S HALESWORTH



fAMILY
Breakfast Church

St Mary's Church Halesworth
9th February at 10 am



FAMILY PICNICS
Easter

10th April 2025
17th April 2025
11:30 TILL 1PM

St Mary's Halesworth



Shrove Tuesday
St Mary's Halesworth

4-5:30 pm
Story-time, Pancake Making, Crafts,
Pancake Races
3-11 year olds



5 Week Program

STARTING RITE
Spiritual Nurture for Babies and their Parents
Starting February 2025 - Friday Afternoons
To enquire or book please email:
pauline@growingtogetherearlyyears.co.uk



TOY AND UNIFORM EXCHANGE

11:30 TILL 15:00
20TH FEBRUARY 2025

ST MARY'S CHURCH, HALESWORTH

FoSM Lunchtime Recital Review - December 2024

The lunchtime concert at St Mary's Church on Wednesday 18th December was an impressive music recital given by our now familiar singers, Veronica Downing (soprano) and Wendy Slaney (mezzo), with Jonathan Rutherford as accompanist.

This was a recital described by Veronica as "A Christmas stocking of songs", which implies lightweight gifts of a Christmassy flavour. Not so here. Solid classics dominated the first half.

Both the singers were in good voice, taking turns to sing each aria.

Veronica started the recital with Mozart's *Exultate Jubilate*, with its daunting runs. Although she captured every note (no mean feat), I do think that the aria would have been delivered to greater effect had it been placed rather later in the programme. Next came more arias by Mozart, then Handel, Bizet and Schubert.

The second half was lighter. Songs were now sung in English, and included the lesser-known *The Water Mill* by Vaughan Williams, some Gilbert and Sullivan, and some Gershwin. Particularly enjoyable was Wendy's rendering of *Wouldn't it be Lovely* from *My Fair Lady*, and *The Man I Love* from *Lady Be Good*, sung with a broad accent and beautiful clarity.

The recital was finished off with *Vilja* from *The Merry Widow* sung by Veronica, sounding a little hesitant, or perhaps tired, and, finally, *Don't cry for me Argentina* from *Evita*, sung by Wendy.

Jonathan provided a robust and supportive accompaniment on the piano throughout.

The two singers got together to sing *We wish you a Happy Christmas*. It is a shame that there had been no other duets in the recital, for the ladies were well matched vocally. Hopefully, a selection of duets will feature in any future recital of theirs.

CPB

**If you are a member of a group
or organisation and you would
like to share your
monthly news, reports
or activities with the local
community,
please email your articles to
*Blyth Valley Times***

blyth.valley.times@gmail.com

BVTimes subscription price increase for 2025

With effect from 1st January 2025, the home delivery price for an annual subscription to *Blyth Valley Times* increased to £18 per year. This is our first increase in the subscription price for many years.

For subscribers who currently have their magazine delivered to their home each month, the new price will take effect from the 2025-6 subscription renewal issue. In most cases, this will be from the May 2025 issue, and, should you wish to renew for a further year, your local distributor will collect your annual subscription payment.

If you wish to pay by BACS, the account details are as follows: Barclays Bank plc, account Blyth Valley Team Ministry 13647579, sort code 20-53-06. Cheques should be made payable to *Blyth Valley Team Ministry* please.

The *BVTimes* cover price is £1.50 per copy (where sold).

We have delivery rounds in most of the BVChurches parishes, should you wish to find out more about the home delivery service in your town/village, please telephone 01986 875941, or email: blyth.valley.times@gmail.com

We also offer a postal delivery service - a copy of the latest *BVTimes* is posted to your home address each month. The price for a postal subscription is £40 (incl p&p) per year. (Payment details as above).

For all *BVTimes* enquiries, please telephone the church office on 01986 875941 or email: blyth.valley.times@gmail.com

Thank you!



NO BAD FEET **Susan Fitch, A.H.C.P.**

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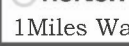
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The Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin Halesworth

2025 concert / events highlights

Saturday, 8th March

10am - 4pm

A SPECTRUM OF SONG - OPEN TO ALL

A vibrant workshop for all who enjoy singing music for worship
Tickets £10 from www.stedscathedral.org/inharmony

Wednesday, 12 March

12noon for 12.30pm

2025 Lunchtime Recital Series opens with an Organ Recital given by Jason Busby

A lunchtime recital organised by the Friends of St. Mary's
FREE ENTRY / retiring collection / refreshments / bring your own lunch

Saturdays 5th OR 12th April

PAKEFIELD SINGERS CONCERT

TO BE CONFIRMED!

Sunday, 13th April

9.45 for 10am

PALM SUNDAY PROCESSION

The procession leaves the library at 9.45am up to St. Mary's
for a 10am Holy Communion Service

Sunday, 20th April

2.30pm for 3pm

ST GEORGE'S DAY PARADE & CIVIC SERVICE

A 2.30pm procession through town from the Library up to St. Mary's
for a 3pm CIVIC SERVICE

24th - 28th April

INK FESTIVAL ACROSS HALESWORTH

Sunday, 18th May

6pm

Choral Evensong by Martyn Bagnalls singing group Jubilate

Join us for a special Choral Evensong Service

Sunday, 25th May

3pm

Come to the Fair

We welcome back Malcolm & Elizabeth of CHANTERS JIGGE for an
afternoon concert - Tickets £10 on the door

Saturday, 2nd August

Timings TBC

BREAD & WINE FESTIVAL

The second Lammass bread & wine festival
More details to follow soon...

Wednesday, 13th August

12 for 12.30pm

CONCERT PIANIST JILL CROSSLAND PERFORMS- FIRST RECITAL APPEARANCE

A lunchtime recital organised by the Friends of St. Mary's
FREE ENTRY / retiring collection / refreshments / bring your own lunch

Sunday, 5th October

10am

HARVEST FESTIVAL

Join us for a 10am Harvest Festival Service followed by
a community lunch in St. Mary's - EVERYONE IS INVITED

TBC

(likely in November)

SILENT FILM NIGHT

The Phantom of the Opera - with Tom Horton on the organ
Tickets £10 on the door

Sunday, 9th November

3pm

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY PARADE & SERVICE

Parade leaves Coopers at 2.30pm for a 3pm service followed
by the act of Remembrance round the arboretum

Thursday, 18 December

2pm

All access Carol Service

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