



Blyth Valley Times

A Service of the Church for our Local Communities

February 2024

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Issue 2

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THE SERVICE OF CLIPPING — ST ANDREW’S WISSETT, SHROVE TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13th, 7pm

The word "clipping" is Anglo-Saxon in origin, and is derived from the word "clyppan", meaning "embrace" or "clasp". Clipping may well have its origin in the mists of time, well before Christianity came to this island. We can imagine ancient pagans linking arms in a wide circle around a sacred site, but perhaps the intention was to contain and confine a fearsome pagan deity rather than show affection for a sacred place!

In clipping, as in many things, the Christian Church took over, adapted and ‘baptised’ this ceremony. Clipping is known of in some places up to Reformation times, but would certainly have been denounced by Puritans, along with Christmas and other festivals, as being far too much fun!

Clipping was revived in Victorian times, and takes place in different ways according to the tradition of particular places. Now it is seen as the whole community embracing their church building, the House of God, in which generations have worshipped, been baptised, married and buried.

In some traditions, people link hands in a very large circle around the church, encompassing as much of the churchyard as possible, and perform a circle dance (again of Pagan origin!) whilst singing. Historically, church clipping often involved a chain dance including ‘threading the needle’ where the line of dancers goes

under the arch made by the leading couple, a larger version of some of the barn dances we still do today.

Those gathered at the clipping ceremony, are asked to embrace St Andrew’s church, where prayer is still valid, which speaks to all who live near it of the things of the Spirit, of One who is almighty and everlasting, who reaches out to humankind in tenderness and love.

Please come and join us for the Clipping Service at St Andrew’s Wissett, one of only a few churches still to enjoy this old custom.

After the service, as is the tradition, pancakes and light refreshments will be available.



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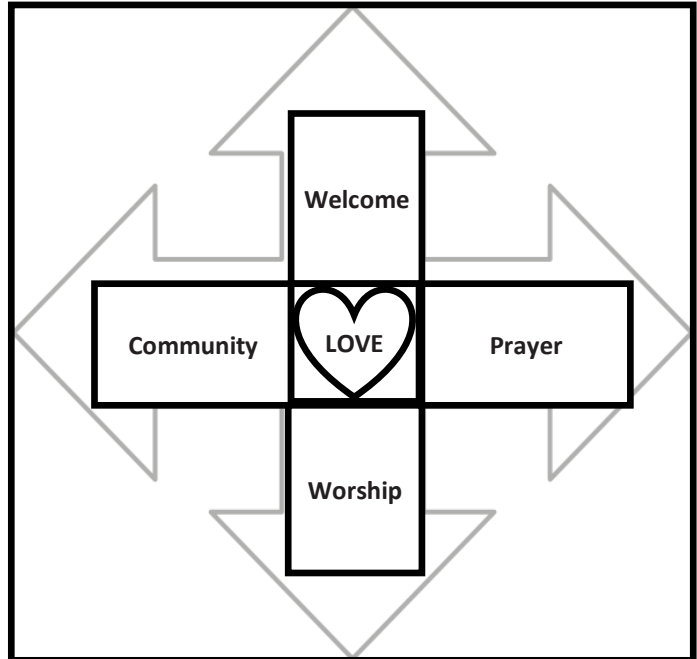
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www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk

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St. Mary's Church Halesworth

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February 2024 Lectionary**Sunday 4th – Green****Traditional Communion – Sexagesima**

Genesis 3.9–19 (KJV)

Luke 8: 4 – 15 (KJV)

Holy Communion – Second Before Lent

Colossians 1: 15 – 20 (NRSV)

John 1: 1 – 14 (NRSV)

Sunday 11th – Green**Traditional Communion – Quinquagesima**

1 Corinthians 13: 1 – end (KJV)

Luke 18: 31 – end (KJV)

Holy Communion – Next Before Lent

2 Corinthians 4: 3 – 6 (NRSV)

Mark 9: 2 – 9 (NRSV)

Sunday 18th – Purple**Traditional Communion – First in Lent**

2 Corinthians 6: 1 – 10 (KJV)

Matthew 4: 1 – 11 (KJV)

Holy Communion – First Sunday of Lent

1 Peter 3: 18 – end (NRSV)

Mark 1: 9 – 15 (NRSV)

Sunday 25th – Purple**Traditional Communion – Second in Lent**

1 Thessalonians 4: 1 – 8 (KJV)

Matthew 15: 21 – 28 (KJV)

Holy Communion – Second Sunday of Lent

Romans 4: 13 – end (NRSV)

Mark 8: 31 – end (NRSV)

Worship in the Blyth Valley in February 2024				
CW – Year A Continuous	4th Green CW – Second Before BCP – Sexagesima	11th Green CW – Next Before BCP - Quinquagesima	18th Purple CW – First of Lent BCP – First in Lent	25th Purple CW – Second of Lent BCP – Second in Lent
Halesworth St Mary	8am Traditional Communion Dominic 10am TEAM Holy Communion Dominic 6pm Evensong Dominic	8am Traditional Communion Dominic 10am Family Communion Gini 6pm Evensong Dominic	8am Traditional Communion Dominic 10am Holy Communion Alison 6pm Evensong Dominic	8am Traditional Communion Dominic 10am Morning Prayer Jason 6pm Evensong Dominic
St Peter Group				
Holton St Peter		10am Morning Prayer Vic	10am Iona Worship Bill	10am Holy Communion Dominic
Wenhaston St Peter		10.30am United Service at Wenhaston Methodist Church	10am Holy Communion Gini	10am Pause for Thought Alison
Bramfield St Andrew		10am Holy Communion Linda		
Blyford All Saints			10am Morning Prayer Dominic	
Thorington St Peter				10am Morning Prayer David
St Andrew Group				
Wissett St Andrew		10am Morning Prayer Win	10am Holy Communion Linda	10am Breakfast Church Vic
Chediston St Mary		10am Holy Communion Dominic		10am Morning Prayer Veronica
Spexhall St Peter			10am Morning Prayer David	
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 Alison		
Huntingfield St Mary				10am Morning Prayer Alison C
Walpole St Mary				10am Holy Communion Gini

13th, Shrove Tuesday - 7pm, Clipping Service, St Andrew's Wissett, Dominic

14th, Ash Wednesday - 6pm, Holy Communion with Ashing, St Mary's Halesworth, Dominic

Other Regular Services: 8am and 6pm Tuesday to Saturday: Daily Prayer, St Mary's Halesworth;
10am Tuesdays: Café Church by Zoom; 10am Wednesdays: Holy Communion, St Mary's Halesworth;
9.30am Thursdays: Morning Worship, St Andrew's Bramfield.

Wenhaston Methodist Church

Coles Lane, Wenhaston

Minister: The Revd Martin Keenan

FEBRUARY 2024

4th	The Revd Martin Keenan (Covenant Service)
11th	Mrs Laura Lawrence - Martin (US)
18th	The Revd Robin Searles
25th	The Revd Iain McKillop

ALL SUNDAY SERVICES at 10.30am
(unless stated otherwise)

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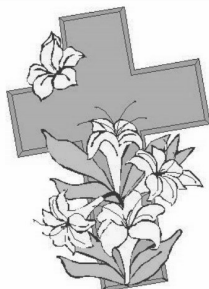
Roman Catholic Church,
Church Farm Lane, Halesworth

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

SERVICES for FEBRUARY

Friday 2nd	9.30am Prayer Meeting in the Church and Zoom followed by Coffee Morning
Sunday 4th	11am Gathered Worship Minister Jon Sermon
Tuesday 6th	10am to 12 noon Coffee morning at Lowestoft followed by Morning Worship
Friday 9th	9.30am Prayer Meeting in the Church and Zoom followed by Coffee Morning
Sunday 11th	11am Gathered Worship TBA
Tuesday 13th	10am to 12 noon Coffee morning at Lowestoft followed by Morning Worship
Friday 16th	9.30am Prayer Meeting in the Church and Zoom followed by Coffee Morning
Sunday 18th	11am Gathered Worship Minister Jon Sermon
Tuesday 20th	10am to 12noon Coffee morning at Lowestoft followed by Morning Worship
Friday 23rd	9.30am Prayer Meeting in the Church and Zoom followed by Coffee Morning
Sunday 25th	11am Gathered Worship (Dorothy Courtis)
Tuesday 27th	10am to 12 noon Coffee morning at Lowestoft followed by Morning Worship

Jon Sermon: 01986 873761 pastorjonsermon@gmail.com

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 Alison Alder at:
alisonalder@hotmail.co.uk
or

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

From the Rector...

Apart from our regular worship this month; as usual, we have two seasonal specials on offer. Both in the same week, these are:

7pm, 13th, Shrove Tuesday, Clipping Service, St Andrew's, Wissett

6pm, 14th, Ash Wednesday, Holy Communion with Ashing, St Mary's, Halesworth

They are both very topical and helpful as we look at the signs of the times. This may surprise you as you may think church is irrelevant and the vicars should keep out of politics. Let's take a step back and unpack some of what these services are about and then come back to that in a bit.

Even today, our Morning Prayer reading was from Chapter One of Genesis. That's right that first book in the Hebrew scriptures which says God made everything in six days. Whether you need it to be literal or are happy for it to be metaphorical, the key messages in the end are the same. They are: spirituality is part of creation, and as humans are part of creation, spirituality must be part of our DNA. It is a religious text so that shouldn't surprise us. And: we all have responsibility for it all. You may believe we have responsibility because we are called to it by God. Or you may know it as someone who can see the consequences of our cutting the branch on the trunk side of where we are sitting. Either way we must surely agree we are culpable.

That collective spirituality and common responsibility or reliance is what these two acts of worship are about. The Clipping Service is a traditional acceptance that we are the church and the church is us. Or as our benefices motto has it: we are church in community and community in church. A part of the ceremony is to form a human shield around the St Andrew Parish Church building. Holding it safe. Acknowledging our responsibility for it as community at this time having had that charge passed on to us by those who have gone before and entrusted to us by those who are yet to be. It is simply not possible for one person, or the few on the committee to do that practically, liturgically, let alone legally, financially and so on and so on. Part of our response to that collective consciousness of care is to celebrate together our realisation that we can give up our demands and our striving for stuff, ease, attention, exemption. We eat pancakes to use up our store cupboard ingredients before Lent. It is the second of our annual Christian fasts, observed in preparation for the feast of the resurrection, Pasch or Easter. This demonstrates that we have chosen not to consume all we can but to consider the consequences for our community and all creation for those who do. It's not just the church that we have a spiritual connection with, responsibility for and reliance on but the world it represents in time and place - and beyond.

This leads us on to Ash Wednesday. It seems that there are two types of people today. Those who care and those who don't. Though I don't claim to understand how it works, I know it does: Holy Communion, offers those who dare to care a place to nail their colours to the mast. We literally kneel or stand together to demonstrate our acceptance or belief that Jesus was right to die for what he believed in. He showed that unless we have faith to heed the messaging of the activists or prophets we will not get up. If we do not get up and get out of our comfort zones we will remain enslaved to those whose wealth is notionally based on futures' value in the face of global insecurity. Sufficient to buy but not for tax. Crusading to colonise but not for country. We'll die waiting for trickle down, levelling up, net zero, or for the boats to stop. Ash Wednesday, sort of bookends Lent, over against Maundy Thursday. The liturgy compels, and allows, us to spiritually accept our collective responsibility, by each individually receiving a mark on our foreheads of burnt palm crosses to the words: 'Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return. Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.'


If we can step back – get out of our silos – and participate in these acts of connection with 'The Name' we may find the inspiration and strength not blame others for our woes. We may find ourselves not so ready to blindly accept that woke protestors or the Hunt, Israelis or Hamas, sub-postmasters or Horizon IT, are the sole reason we are not happy. Lent is prime time to reflect on our acceptance that together we do have enough if only we are prepared to share our spiritual responsibilities.

Dominic

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HALESWORTH & BRAMFIELD UNITED REFORMED CHURCHES

Revd Jon Sermon – Minister

Dear Friends,

Some of you may remember that there was a time, before Halesworth Methodist Church closed down, that our URC input sat alongside one from them, and there were regular columns from St Edmund's Roman Catholic Church. They were grouped together under a heading "News from Our Sister Churches". Now that it is usually only us, the heading is gone – and our thoughts often sit between "From the Rector..." and "What has your Team Vicar been up to?"

Now that we have just experienced gathering together in a number of contexts during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, I was reflecting how both of these seem so appropriate: They underline the truth that we ARE Sister Churches to one another. We are following the same Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

And you still see information about worship times and/or contact details, not only from us but also St Edmund's and Wenhasston Methodist. The invitation to share in one another's events as we wish, helps to underline the Christian Unity that we are praying for and tentatively struggling towards.

As well as being 'Sister Churches' we, together with all disciples of Jesus, locally and internationally, for THE Church – the Body of Christ.

We jointly share in the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 18-20) to make disciples of all nations. With this comes the promise that Jesus is with us – by the Holy Spirit.

Ruth and I are involved in an international and inter-denominational equipping ministry called The Dunamis Fellowship. (locally, Dunamis Fellowship Britain and Ireland) which seeks to help address the equipping we all need in receiving God's empowerment to play a part in this Great Commission.

During Covid lockdowns, a lot of the ministry went 'on-line' and this has continued. It includes an event coming up called Virtual Upper Room. I am part of the leadership for this event and I'd like to invite you - our Sister Churches - to come and receive a blessing. Please see page 11 of this issue for more details. Hope to see you on screen on Tuesday 6th February.

Blessings

Jon

**Revd Jon Sermon,
Minister of Halesworth & Bramfield URC
and North Lowestoft URC**



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8am Traditional Communion, every Sunday.

6pm Evensong, most Sundays.

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What has your Team Vicar been up to?

January, the month where advertising moves from "Go on, you know you want to!" to "New Year, new you!" while faced with the cold damp grey months ahead. Happily, we have had some sunshine and I myself am rather partial to a cold, crisp, bright day. I had a week off which was welcome, but I am

not sure how rested I felt on coming back to work.

It feels like I am simply not getting things right yet. It has been a major readjustment since being diagnosed with MS and just when I think I have found my new normal I get over-excited, overdo it and end up back at square one. I think it's during holidays when I feel most disabled. I can't walk as far, do as much, visit as many interesting places and whatever I do takes its toll.

The fact is that I have a limited energy budget, so I need to choose carefully what I want to spend it on. And there needs to be a balance between ministry, family-time, self-care and social-time. It all takes energy. There are a number of helpful analogies around, such as the spoon theory or the phone-battery charge. You wake up each day with a certain number of spoons or a certain level of battery charge and you can decide how to use them before running out. I find the spoon theory more useful because once you have used up a spoon, no amount of rest gives you more spoons, it just stops using up the spoons you would otherwise be using.

Lots of people, experience similar frustrations, often as they age but also if they are diagnosed with an invisible but debilitating illness. It comes with helplessness, grief, guilt and can be very isolating. My faith helps although it is confusing to be so clearly called to church ministry only to feel hampered in my efforts. If it is God's calling, then I must assume that He has other ideas about what my ministry should look like. It has certainly given me more empathy in my pastoral ministry and it is making me think and pray more about what exactly I should be focusing on.

So what have I been up to? I have been doing a lot of thinking, planning and resting so that I can offer the best ministry I can in the coming year. That means giving some things up like General Synod and weekly Tot's Time at St Mary's and focusing on the after-school club at Holton Primary school and helping with school holiday lunches and toy/clothing exchanges at St Mary's in Halesworth. It also means asking for more help with community events. As for church services of all kinds, they are my joy and privilege to continue. Who knows what new buds the Spring will bring!

With love and blessings

Revd Gini

LIFE EVENTS

FROM THE REGISTERS IN JANUARY

FUNERALS/INTERMENT OF ASHES

Dr Maureen Elizabeth Cain at Huntingfield
Trevor John Leftley at Holton
Norman Harold Antony Bird at Wenhaston
Alan Victor Spindler at Wenhaston
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Walk the Way of the Cross with the Blyth Valley Churches this Easter!

FRIDAY 15th MARCH, 7.30pm

Bishop Mike Harrison leads a full set of reflections at All Saints Blyford.

Free admission, donations welcome.

(Refreshments may be purchased at the Queen's Head, Blyford afterwards)

FRIDAY 22nd MARCH, from 7.30pm

Artist Iain McKillop talks about his creative encounters with the Stations concept at All Saints Blyford. Free admission, donations welcome.

(Refreshments may be purchased at the Queen's Head, Blyford afterwards)

SATURDAY 23rd MARCH, from 10am

Team Rector Dominic Doble and colleagues will lead a pilgrimage presenting a short contemplation at each parish church in the benefices:

10am	Jesus in Agony - St Peter, Holton
10.30am	Jesus Betrayed - St Mary, Halesworth
11am	Jesus Condemned - St Peter, Spexhall
11.30am	Peter's Denial - St Andrew, Wissett
12pm	Jesus Judged - St Mary, Chediston
12.30pm	Jesus Scourged – St Margaret, Linstead
1pm	Jesus Carries the Cross - St Mary, Huntingfield
1.30pm	Jesus Helped – St Margaret, Heveningham
2.30pm	Jesus Meets the Women - St Michael, Cookley
3pm	Jesus is Crucified - St Mary, Walpole
3.30pm	Jesus' Promise - St Andrew, Bramfield
4pm	Jesus on the Cross - St Peter, Thorington
4.30pm	Jesus Dies - St Peter, Wenhaston
5pm	Jesus is Buried - All Saints, Blyford

Further details from Revd Dominic Doble 07743 554955.

Email: dominic.doble@phoncoop.coop

Walk the Way of the Cross with the Blyth Valley Churches this Easter!

This Spring, the churches of the Blyth Valley are giving you the opportunity to visit the Holy Land without leaving Suffolk! Across their fourteen churches they are presenting an exhibition of original paintings by nationally acclaimed, local, religious artist Iain McKillop. These Stations of The Cross focus the attention of visitors on the last known movements of Jesus, among them: his mock trial, him meeting women in the crowds and his execution.

During the Crusades, Europeans visited the Holy Land and discovered the actual places they had previously only read about in accounts of Jesus' final hours.

This was such a moving experience that upon their return the practice of Stations of the Cross arose. It involves the setting up of images anti-clockwise around a building, so that worshippers may travel virtually with these early pilgrims and their saviour.



Left:
The Eighth Station:
Jesus helped by
Simon of Cyrene.

The Blyth Valley Stations of the Cross 2024 will open with Bishop Mike Harrison leading a full set of reflections for a seated congregation at All Saints, Blyford, at 7.30pm on Friday 15th March. The Queens Head, Blyford, will be open afterwards so people may stay and buy refreshments. A copy of each of the images will be prayerfully presented in each of the fourteen churches of the benefices for the following week. From 7.30pm on Friday 22nd March, the artist Iain McKillop will talk about his creative encounters with the Stations concept. Again, refreshments may be purchased at the Queens Head afterwards.

On Saturday 23rd March Team Rector, Dominic Doble, and colleagues will lead a pilgrimage presenting a short contemplation at each parish church in the benefices.

'It is always a joy and a challenge to be confronted by beautiful art work that explores difficult aspects of life' writes Bishop Mike. 'I am so grateful to Iain for his remarkable Stations of the Cross sequence. He says he 'looks forward to offering some thoughts alongside these images to honour the injustice, isolation and pain of our own experiences.'

Iain McKillop said 'It has been special creating a new Passion series for my local parishes, hoping that neighbours can find through them, meaning in Christ's self-offering, which reaches into their own lives and the world in which we live today.'

All fourteen churches in the Blyth Valley are open during daylight hours. There is no charge for any of these events. However, our church committees are grateful for your generosity towards maintaining the parochial ministry that underpins events such as this.



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A Healthy Church is a Happy Church



wideawakechristian.blogspot.com

Who doesn't love a church wedding, church as a jazz band venue, singing carols at Christmas, or using the building for a clothes swap? If you don't this isn't for you! Only the other day, someone said they felt strongly that churches were not just for Christians. They said many with no particular faith position love a good quiet sit from time to time to process stuff, or simply and get away from it all.

There is so much more our that our church committees would like to offer you - our churches' communities.

Sadly, however, we lack the person power and income.

Our current Team Rector, Dominic, is keen to maintain all our churches offering them for

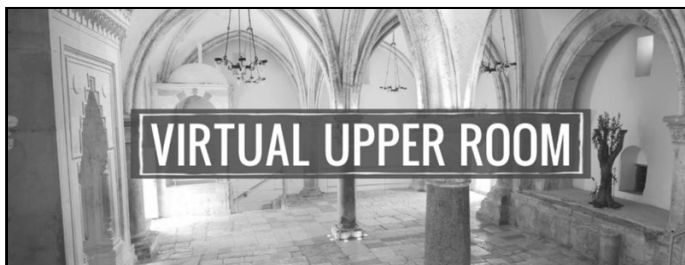
community and fundraising activities including worship, so that they are not sold off during his watch. So, if you would like to contribute your administrative, fundraising and or communications skills to keep our churches healthy and happy do let us know. (Dominic – 07743 554955).

Where are the vacancies?

All our churches would be keen to recruit more people to their independent charity councils. Some office holders would step down if there were others in the wings. More specifically, most church committees really could do with a second Churchwarden – nearly all only have one. We legally should have two, and two could do so much more.

Holton, Spexhall and Wissett would love to hear from potential Treasurers. Whilst, Thorington would value a Secretary.

We are also looking to recruit to posts that support the 14 parishes in the group over the next few months, along the same lines fundraising, administration and communications. However, terms and conditions are negotiable for these part-time, possibly paid posts.



The 'starting point' for evangelism – indeed for growth in faith and fulfilling the Great Commission, must be the equipping of the Holy Spirit. We simply cannot make disciples of all nations (Matt 28: 18-20) through our human skills and abilities.

As well as gathered events, the Dunamis ministry offers on-line ways of accessing the equipping Jesus wants to give His church, including Virtual Upper Room events.

The next one is Tuesday 6th February @ 7.30pm.

Go to www.dunamis.org.uk for details, including a five minute video explaining the Virtual Upper Room. And it is necessary to book to receive an invitation and Zoom link.

At this particular Virtual Upper Room, I am giving some of the Bible input. So you will see a familiar face, the Minister of one of your Sister Churches.

Jon Sermon

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37 Thoroughfare, Halesworth IP19 8LE



No faith in fossil fuels!

Jim and Sue Green, of St Mary's Halesworth, are giving up some of their time during Lent for a 10-day climate justice prayer vigil outside the Houses of Parliament, and at home, and possibly at one of the Blyth Valley churches if there is interest.

The event – which will run around-the-clock from February 14th-24th - has been organised by a coalition of charities including A Rocha UK, Christian Aid, Christian Climate Action, Green Christian, Operation Noah, the Salvation Army and Tearfund.

Starting on Ash Wednesday, Jim and Sue from Halesworth will be joining others taking part in the vigil at Westminster, as well as in their homes and churches.

Jim said: "I feel very strongly climate justice is something we should all be taking action on, and none more so than those with the power to create worldwide change and bring justice for our global neighbours.

"People in the world's poorest countries have done the least to contribute to the climate crisis and yet are paying the harshest price. We need bold action now – we need the Government to make the UK's biggest polluters pay for climate action; deliver and build on the UK's international climate finance pledges as well as pay into the UN's Loss & Damage Fund; and ban new UK-based fossil fuel projects."

People will be holding vigil and praying 24 hours a day for 10 days outside Parliament to highlight the call for politicians to Make Polluters Pay. Those praying at church are also encouraged to invite their MP to a meeting or service.

Anyone who wants to take part can register for a slot at Westminster: 24-7 Prayer International - Sign-Up.

You can find out more and get the resources to take part here: NFIFF Lent Vigil for Climate Justice - Christian Aid.

HALESWORTH BRANCH OF CANCER RESEARCH

We had a quiet month in January but are looking forward to starting our 2024 events in February with our very popular Jumble Sale where we will be serving our usual delicious cakes and teas and coffees, (please see our advertisement on page 28).

We are always very grateful for good quality items of ladies'; men's and children's clothes, household linens, bric-à-brac, shoes and accessories, toys, jigsaws and books.

We are very sorry, but we are not allowed to take any electrical items, we also have no facilities to take large items such as furniture etc. If you have any items that you would like to donate please get in touch.

Cancer Research Dates for 2024:

In Holton Village Hall - Jumble Sale February 10th, 10am - 12pm; Big Breakfast March 23rd, 9am - 1pm; Spring Fair May 18th, 10.30am - 2pm; Jumble Sale October 19th, 10am - 12pm; Christmas Fair November 23rd 10.30am - 2pm

Also: iChameleon Pop-up Shop in Halesworth July 4th - 10th.

We apologise for any inconvenience but unfortunately all our events have to be cash only as we don't have access to a card machine.

We hope our loyal friends, and new ones, will continue to support our events in 2024 as we can't do it without you all.

Every penny we raise is vital to ensure the research work continues so together we can say we will beat cancer.

The committee and volunteers are so very grateful to everyone who came to our events, donated food items, raffle prizes, baked, cooked, or sponsored us or contributed in any way and made 2023 our most successful year yet.

Thank you all so much.

Thank you also to Holton & Blyford Village Hall for all they do for us.

Dawn Davis, 01986 873640

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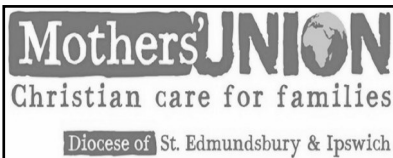
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Page includes excerpts from
Transformation Now!

www.musuffolk.org.uk
Charity No 249726

St Mary's Woodbridge Branch

During November into December, the Notice Board in St Mary's Church, Woodbridge was decorated to highlight 'The Red Chair Project'. A chair mirroring this was moved around the Church to catch visitor's attention. The information on the Notice Board will remain, with a mini red chair, to highlight that domestic abuse happens every day of the year.

Jean Cobb

Yoxmere Travelling Nativity

Linda gathered with her grandsons to talk about the nativity set and read the Christmas story together talking about how the birth of Jesus affects us today - 2000 years on. It was a lovely occasion. This was followed by drinks and cakes.

Mothers' Union Member's Day

Inviting all Mothers' Union Members to
St Michael's Church: The Drift, Martlesham Heath IP5 3SH
Thursday 7th March 2024 10.30am – 12.30pm Doors open from 10am

Programme to include:

Prayer and Worship, Craft Stall and Activities MUE Pop-up Shop



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



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
(27 Norwich Road, Halesworth IP19 8BX)

Telephone 01986 835905 or just call in

*For anyone interested in working and socialising around a
bench for themselves, others or the community*

Prayer Diary for 2024

If you have not received your copy of the Prayer Diary please contact Clare Thomas 01473 832808.

or email: Clare.Thomas@mothersunion.org

Please put the date for the Member's Day in your diary

Message from VP Jeanette

Please can you send your 2023 Branch Activity and Goods Donated Logbook to Jeanette as soon as possible This helps Mary Sumner House to demonstrate the extent of our outreach projects and programmes, to justify our charity status. Some branches are not as active as others but whatever your branch has been able to do will be part of the positive impact that MU has in our communities. Send to Jeanette.Appleton@mothersunion.org or by post to Field View, Hadleigh Road, Holton St. Mary, Suffolk. CO7 6NP.

Lady Day Service

This year our service will be held on March 22nd at 11am. In St Peter & St Paul Church, Lavenham CO10 9SA. Maybe this could be an opportunity to look round Lavenham and have a pub lunch after the service.

Ipswich Area

We raised £572.42 at the Coffee morning on Sat 19th November 2023 at St Michael's Church Martlesham. Thank you for donating items and coming to support us. It was a great morning with plenty of chatter and fellowship. This Christmas, instead of asking branches to donate Christmas Gift Vouchers for the local Woman's Refuges, we used some of the money from Ipswich Area and the Woman's Refuge fund. Ipswich Area has bought £300 of vouchers from Asda and Primark for Ipswich Refuge and biscuits and sweets for the ladies and staff. Jane Leung from the Cathedral Branch supported Bury Refuge in the same way. Thank you to you all for your continued support. Hope you all have a Happy and Peaceful New Year. Sandra Griffiths (Ipswich Area Rep.)

Prayers

'More things are wrought by Prayer than this world dreams of' *Alfred, Lord Tennyson*

We pray for all those who have been poorly over Christmas and for their recovery.

We remember with gratitude the faithful service of MU members who have passed away during 2023. Please enfold in your love, all their families and friends

In this final year of the triennium, we ask that you will guide and support our Diocesan President Linda and our President Elect Jeanette, together with Trustees and Officers, as they make decisions about the future direction of MU.

We pray for the staff at Mary Sumner House, that they may provide effective support for branches across the world.

We hold in our prayers MU members in branches far and near as we work to prayerfully and practically support each other in whatever challenges are before us.

We thank God for many blessings as we reflect on the old year and embark on the new.

'O Thou who has given us so much, mercifully grant us one more thing – a grateful heart' *George Herbert*.

O Lord in your mercy - hear our prayers. **Amen.**



WELCOME WEDNESDAYS: LUNCH TIME!

All welcome
for homemade soup,
filled rolls and cakes



It's free but
donations are
welcome!

Wednesday 28th
February

12.30 - 2PM

St Mary's Church
Halesworth



Please call Rev Gini on 01986 875541
for more information

Waveney and Blyth Environment Group



Next meeting:

Thursday 8th February

7.30pm

Church Room, St Peter's Church,

Holton

IP19 8NG

For more details contact: Revd Alison Alder
alisonalder@hotmail.co.uk / 01502 478855

FOR DETAILS OF SERVICES AND LOCAL EVENTS,
PLEASE VISIT BLYTH VALLEY CHURCHES WEBSITE:

www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk

There are news items and photos on our
Facebook page too:



Find us at: [blythvalleychurchessuffolk](https://www.facebook.com/blythvalleychurchessuffolk)

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The Blyth Valley Ministry Team



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Team Rector

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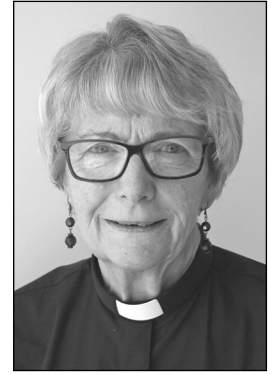
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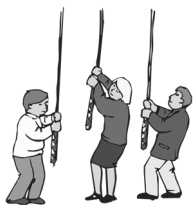
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CHURCHWARDENS

PARISH	CHURCHWARDEN	CONTACT
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Bramfield	Jinnie Barham	01986 784254
Chediston	Jo Wareham	07711 066727
Cookley	Jane Evers	01986 785209
Halesworth	Jason Busby	01986 873336
Heveningham	Jeanette Griffin	01986 798280
Holton	John Hewlett Chris Knevett	01986 875913 01986 872467
Huntingfield	Emma Ward	01986 785343
Linstead	Malcolm Heath	01986 785289
Spexhall	Keith Noakes	07939 527340
Thorington	Mike Gower	01502 478078
Walpole	Ken Allen Lee Hill	01986 784240 07713 450078
Wenhaston	Jonathan Alder	01502 478855
Wissett	Geoffrey Kiddy	01986 873173



From the Ringing Chamber

The Christmas season saw us ringing for innumerable Carol Services, three of them at Halesworth, which required reinforcements from as far away as Cambridge, but pleasingly the standard of ringing was always good, which of course is how it's meant to be!

A quarter peal of Single Court Bob Minor still eludes us. Yet another Friday evening attempt at Wissett has generated half an hour's good ringing followed by a short but terminal "fire-up". The latest failure was largely down to conductor error – I thought two bells had swapped places when they hadn't, and the ensuing scramble and then unscramble completely threw the rest of the band. We'll keep trying! I don't know why we've been having so much difficulty with this one. It's not a particularly complicated method although it has some unfamiliar aspects, and non-stop concentration for 40 minutes or so is hard work!

PJG

ECUMENICAL CLERGY

The Revd Martin Keenan

Methodist Minister

8 Corton Road, Lowestoft NR32 4PL. Tel: **01502 560178**

Email: martin.keenan@methodist.org.uk

Jon Sermon

URC Minister, Halesworth & Bramfield URC,

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Roman Catholic Priest

St Edmund King & Martyr Roman Catholic Church,

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Email: blyth.valley.times@gmail.com

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Tel 01986 875941.

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Philip Gorrod: *Contact for bell ringers across the Team*

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NIGHT PRAYER

Compline

9.30pm
Every Sunday

LIVE ON FACEBOOK

Search: *blythvalleychurchessuffolk*

News from Town & Villages

Blyford

Correspondent

Alison Cackett 01986 874442
acackett@me.com

Bramfield

Correspondent

Joanna Wilkinson
07986 217868
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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.



A few dates for the diary:

Saturday 9th March - 10am - 12noon, Churchyard clear up;

Saturday 13th April - 10am - 1pm, Church Bazaar;

Wednesday 24th April - APCM, 7pm - 7.30pm in the church. Tea and cakes. We would like to see as many parishioners attend as possible.

Robert Bourke "Bob"

13.11.28 – 30.11.23

A Celebration and Thanksgiving Service was held for Robert Bourke at Bramfield Church on 19.12.23 at 12pm, taken by the Revd Dominic Doble.

We celebrated this well-known local farmer, who was brought up at Walnut Tree Farm, Thorington and who was a pupil of Bramfield School. He was a lover of all things rural and had beautiful prize bulls, a dairy herd, and then later on, farmed crops. He was very well-known in the community and we wish his wife and family all the best at this time.

Chediston

Correspondent

Sally Aldous 01986 873363

With Christmas and New Year festivities all over, January can seem a rather dull month. However, the present frosty conditions have brought some lovely sunny middays and spectacular sunsets in the early evening, not to mention drying up the sodden land which hopefully will help the farmers.

In the garden I have some primroses out (not the wild ones) but looking rather forlorn. The bulbs are also pushing their way up in the soil, hopefully they won't come up too soon.

I was lucky enough to hear a bird singing during the day and wondered if it was a thrush.

Ted Wilson

Good news that Ted is home and recuperating from his operation. We send him and Julia our love and best wishes.

Chediston & Linstead WI

This meeting took place in Linstead Village Hall on Tuesday 9th January.

Our speaker was Robert Halliday, an experienced Suffolk historian and his subject was Suffolk Calendar Customs.

With the help of slides he took us through the months with the many varied strange and sometimes quaint customs celebrated from Plough Sunday in January to the Cutty Wren ceremony in December. He also mentioned Suffolk PUNCHES and Morris Dancers.

We look forward to the forthcoming WI programme for 2024.

More news from Chedistonians for BVTimes would be greatly appreciated by me as, with living out of the village, it can be difficult to keep abreast of events and I would love to hear more.

SA

Cookley

Correspondent Jane Evers

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

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.



Remembering Ronald Clifford Goodson

Ron passed away on January 3rd and will be very much missed by his family, friends, the community he served and all of us at St Mary's and beyond.

Ron served the community from his little shop 'Goodies' on London Road for decades and, throughout, worshipped and served faithfully at St Mary's.

Ron served as Churchwarden with the

late Paddy Flegg, was keeper of keys for the Church Hall, Treasurer, managing bookings and maintenance. Ron also went on a Ministry Training Course to serve as a Lay Elder.

Although Ron and Jean didn't return to St Mary's post-Covid for health reasons, every week at Café Church and LIVE on Zoom or more recently YouTube they would join our worship online.

Throughout these many years Ron was a PCC member, certainly the longest serving in recent history. At our meeting on January 16th we offered prayers and kept a moment of quiet in memory of Ron whose funeral takes place at 11.30am in St. Mary's on Tuesday 6th February.

At the families request the service will be broadcast live:

www.youtube.com/@halesworthparish
Donations will be split between St Mary's and 'Action Cerebral Palsy'.



May Ron rest in peace and rise in glory.
The end of an era!

January and February do tend to be quieter months for 'extra-curricular activities' so not a great deal to report on this month.

As I said last month, we were greatly encouraged by turnouts at Christmas services, this includes services which were broadcast LIVE. With over 400 total views we can certainly say that we are spreading the gospel in whatever way we can at St Mary's!

The PCC wishes to thank Pedro for his time and pen pushing to make under pew heating happen in the choir stalls, with thanks to Townsend Electrical for doing the work. We now have under pew heating on the north side (organ side) with the south side being completed shortly, so those who attend 8am Traditional Communion and sing in the Team Choir will be just a little bit warmer!

Looking ahead the first of two concerts of 2024 take place on Friday 5th April - we welcome back 'Chanter's Jigge' - "Songs, ayres, jigs and jollies from around Europe and across the centuries played and sung with ancient traditional and modern instruments". On Saturday 6th April the Aurora Consort will grace us with their beautiful voices for a lunchtime concert. The Bohemian Choir return to St Mary's on Monday 22nd April for a concert as part of their tour of Suffolk.

A reminder, Dominic reads Morning and Evening Prayer, Tue-Sat 8am and 6pm in the Lady Chapel.

You can join me for Night Prayer, Compline, Sundays 9.30pm LIVE on Facebook search:

[blythvalleychurchessuffolk](https://www.facebook.com/blythvalleychurchessuffolk)

St Mary's 50/50 Club

Results of the January draw is as follows: 1st prize - R O'Leary; 2nd prize - B Attenborough; 3rd prize - E Busby.

HALESWORTH WI

Halesworth WI members met up at the Angel Hotel for their Christmas lunch, an opportunity to chat and enjoy good food.

Following the meal, we listened and sang along to the excellent Ukulele Trio who entertained, putting us all in a happy Christmas mood, full of good cheer before wending our way home, wishing everybody all the best and a healthy 2024. **BP**

Heveningham

Correspondent Jeanette Griffin
stmargarechurch11@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-ubboston>

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



With the quieter weeks in January, it was hard to think of something to write, so I reflected back on the past year.

When I volunteered to be the church warden at Heveningham, I had no idea of what it involved and how much there was to learn.

Not only have I learned about different types of candles, books, services, you name it, but also building maintenance and groundsman.

I was asked, why would you do this? There is no financial gain. But these beautiful buildings have stood for centuries and deserve to be loved, and that's what we do, we love them. Every time I walk into the church, I feel peace, with every service I find fulfilment. It can be a challenging job, demanding and sometimes lonely, that's why I am always so grateful for all the help and support that is given. But it does have its rewards and I have met a lot of lovely people.

It's easy to support your church, we are always thankful for volunteers, but by simply popping by and paying us a visit, your donations go a long way to keeping us open. It may be cold outside, and inside, but you will always receive a warm welcome.

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's the February issue of *BVTimes* already! I have been looking in my diary and realised that Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day are both on February 14th. That is going to be a day of mixed

emotions! It also signals the beginning of Lent and the realisation that Easter is going to be very early, Easter Sunday is on March 31st. It is also the day that British Summer Time begins, so I wonder how many people will be late for church!

Thinking about Lent, those forty days of preparation and prayer, made me realise just how important they are in the life of the church, and how vital they are in the understanding of all that Easter means.

It also brought to mind all the trouble that seems to be besetting the world at the moment.

What can we do? We can pray. We can also do something practical. As a result of my cogitation I thought that we could hold two **Lent Lunches** to raise money for Embrace the Middle East, a charity that works with people of all faiths and none in the Middle East. Both John and Chris, our Churchwardens, are happy with the idea, Dottie Booley has said that she will help.

We have decided on Friday 16th February and Friday 1st March in St Peter's Room between 12noon and 2pm. The cost will be £5 for homemade soup, bread and a drink. If you think that you can help in any way please let me know.

THE LABYRINTH EVENT

The next Labyrinth event is on Monday 5th February from 2pm until 4pm at St Peter's, when we will be thinking about Saint Brigid. No, I don't know anything about her either! Apart from learning about Saint Brigid there will be an opportunity for prayer and also for some craftwork which is optional.

HOLTON & BLYFORD VILLAGE HALL TOTE

Recent draw results:

November: 1st prize - Rosemary Stephens; 2nd prize - Michael Kent; 3rd prize - Mr and Mrs Wilmot; 4th prize - Florence Kernohan; 5th prize - Helen George.

December: 1st prize - Andrew and Sue Millard; 2nd prize - Enid Day; 3rd prize - Kevin Smith; 4th prize - Shirley Garner; 5th prize - Tom Meecham.

January 2024: 1st prize - Jane Baldry; 2nd prize - Anne and Richard Pymar; 3rd prize - David Hillman; 4th prize - John and Wendy Mendham; 5th prize - Paul and Janet Gascoigne.

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.



January is at an end already... how did that happen so quickly? I'm sure you will agree that with the New Year we are experiencing colder temperatures, too.

Last year when we were planning our upcoming church services, we decided that for January we would hold our monthly Sunday service in The Hub. The Hub is heated by 'ground source heating' so, in the main, is generally warm and welcoming.

Some members of the congregation find the church far too cold during the winter months, so to the Hub we decamped.

It was a different experience, but a warm one, so thanks to all who attended and we look forward to the warmer weather and being back in our beautiful village church next month.

The Hub has a small 'social space' which is open daily and is available for anyone to make use of. If you need a warm place to sit and read or work then take a look. There are tea and coffee making facilities and free Wi-Fi also.

In the church you will find a good selection of second-hand books and jigsaws to help you through the long dark winter days. Donations go to the church maintenance fund.

If you are planning a visit to the church, it is open daily from 10.30am - 3.30pm. Don't forget to bring a £1 coin to light up the beautiful painted ceiling. Local honey, postcards, greeting cards and notelets are also on sale, payment can be made by cash or card.

Linstead

Correspondent

Malcolm Heath 01986 785289

www.linstead.suffolk.gov.uk

WE HELD OUR FIRST PCC MEETING A few weeks ago. Dominic took the opportunity to explain that not everyone in the Church of England is that committed to the traditional view of the parish, the parish church and the worship therein.

We in Linstead have realised for a long time that the survival of our parish is entirely in our own hands. There is nothing new in this, it was ever thus. Nothing lasts for ever; the countryside is well supplied with ruined churches, closed churches and repurposed churches. We have to face facts, reality even. However, we have a church in reasonable order and there is a quiet determination to keep the parish of Linstead, together with our 1000 year old church, going as long as we can. As I said, nothing lasts for ever, but we are determined that St Margaret of Antioch will not close on our watch.

WE HAD ANOTHER FULL CHURCH TO celebrate Christmas, with our annual service of Carols by Candlelight. Thank you to our readers: Irene Thomas, Jeremy Leicester, Theresa Gilbey, Anne Cousins, Jo Thackary and Win Sutton, who also officiated. A huge thank you also to Kathleen Kelly, who read a Christmas poem that she had written herself. She shows great promise. Thanks also to all who decorated the church, minced the pies and mulled the wine. For us and, I suspect, for most people, this is where Christmas really starts.

WE TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY AT THE PCC to sketch out our provisional programme for 2024.

Sunday 16th June: Open Air Service at St Peter's Linstead Magna.

Sunday 21st July: 12.30pm. Patronal Festival for St Margaret of Antioch and barbecue at Village Hall.

Saturday 14th September: From 7.30pm. Barbecue and music at Village Hall.

Sunday 6th October: 6.30pm. Harvest Festival.

Saturday 19th October: 10am to 1pm. Church Gift Day.

Saturday 30th November: 10am to 1pm. Linstead Market.

December 22nd 3pm. Carols by Candlelight.

It should be stressed that these dates and times are speculative at the moment. Watch the Linstead Letter for details nearer the time.

SERVICES IN FEBRUARY

Matins on the 11th and Holy Communion on the 25th. Both services are at 10am.

Spexhall

Correspondent Keith Noakes
spexhallwoodpecker@gmail.com
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.



Plough Sunday

It felt very special to swing the old early 19th century plough back in front of the sanctuary step for the Plough Sunday service on January 7th. (See photo below).

It was particularly good that there were visitors from Wissett and other parishes in the Team so that we could make this a truly Team service.

With thanks to Dominic for leading our worship, and to all those who helped prepare the church and provided refreshments. Let's all plough on!



New Lectionary

Your Woodpecker correspondent certainly has a bird brain when it comes to understanding how the Lectionary works, but it does make sense! Our thanks to Les LeLean for a very generous donation towards a new Lectionary with the readings for the Holy Communion for each Sunday and Festival. Good to have a Book on the Lectern, and that book being mostly the Bible (in parts!) in a size that can be read from, even if this old bird has to use his reading specs now.

February Fun

Actually, who is Woodpecker kidding with that title? People long for February to be over and to March towards Spring. Most try to stay in hibernation in the poorer weather, but there are always those glimmers of Spring when the sun shines. Of course our neighbours in Wissett all go crazy for 'Clipping'. This Woodpecker may fly over there this year to see what it's all about, as long as they don't clip his wings!

At St Peter's we will have **Morning Prayer on February 18th**, the First Sunday of Lent.

Following on from Clipping fun (Shrove Tuesday 13th), and the reflectiveness of Ash Wednesday (14th) we see the altar with a frontal in blue and purple.

That can only mean one thing - its time to take stock, reflect and grow to a new future.

Our **service is at 10am** and all are welcome. See! March isn't far away, and the Spring will return. Look at the snowdrops, crocuses and daffodils coming through.

Wishing all who fly through Spexhall, as well as those who nest in it, a good Lent!

Thorington

Correspondent

Trish Gower 01502 478078

trish@coastal1.plus.com

We were thrilled to see the church filled for the Carol Service on December 24th and thank you to all the congregation, the readers of lessons and those who kindly made mince pies and mulled wine to make this a memorable occasion.

There were lots of 'new faces' so a warm welcome to them and many familiar ones, too, from different villages. Keep coming!

Also thanks to our organist Paul. More than £250 was collected and donated to the Pear Tree Fund, again thanks to all.

So holly and ivy has been removed from the church and we are thinking ahead to the Spring, so please watch this space and for any events at the church will be detailed in *BVTimes*.

For now, do please visit this ancient building and enjoy a walk in the churchyard, a bench and a circular seat are there for you!

With very best wishes for 2024 from all the PCC.

Walpole

Correspondents

Lee & Anita Hill 07713 450078

anita.hill2006@gmail.com

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.



A belated Happy New Year to everyone. This article is rather retrospective in content as we recall some of our December events.

We kick started December with a wreath making workshop facilitated by PCC member Jane Henson. Places were

in high demand following the success of Jane's workshop in December 2022. The event afforded everyone the opportunity to catch up, enjoy mince pies and mulled wine along with Christmas music to take in the festive mood. Moving forward, we hope this will be a yearly event at St Mary's.

Throughout the year Jane is instrumental in coordinating our floral displays in the church and we thank her for this. Our thanks must also go to those in the village who supported Jane in December to produce the most wonderful of displays in preparation for our Christmas Crib Service.

We were absolutely bowled over by the level of support for the Crib Service, the Church was packed to overflowing and we were delighted to have so many children involved in the readings and the setting out of the Nativity Scene. Our thanks to Revd Linda for leading such a joyous occasion.

We have now had 16 months of a variety of fundraising events to support our planned exterior and interior church renovations and we are feeling positive that this year will see the start and hopefully the completion of the work. We look forward to being able to share updates as the year progresses.

Wenhaston

Correspondent

Margaret Bloomfield

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margaret@wrush.plus.com

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.



It seems rather late to report on this now, but our Carol Service on December 22nd was a lovely occasion. Linda and Alison led the service and it was very well attended. Folk from village organisations read the lessons

and we all sang lustily. It was lovely to see the church so full, and we just had enough mince pies, sausage rolls and mulled wine. We were so pleased that it was such a lovely act of worship.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was from January 18th to 25th. With all the troubles in our world, Christian Unity is so important and there were gatherings all around Halesworth to pray for unity.

We are hoping to arrange our postponed 2023 quiz this Autumn, watch this space.

We will be having a plant sale in May as usual, so if anyone is nurturing plants, we should be grateful for any you have to spare.

February Services

- 4th Team HC Service, 10am, St Mary's Halesworth.
11th United Service at Wenhaston Methodist Church, 10.30am.
18th HC, 10am, St Peter's.
25th Pause for Thought, 10am, St Peter's.

WENHASTON MOTHER'S UNION

2024 – a new year and we started our year, as is our usual custom, with a Service of Holy Communion in the School Room at the Methodist Chapel, the Revd Anna Wright had kindly agreed to lead this Service for us, but was unfortunately unwell and we were extremely grateful to the Revd Iain McKillop who stepped in at the last moment.

We were joined by several of the Halesworth members and we all appreciated Iain's wise words.

The Service was followed by a very brief AGM and tea and biscuits!

We all very much appreciate that the School Room is so welcoming and warm!

We all hope that we will have another successful year with interesting speakers and we hope to join in several Diocesan events. In February we are looking forward to welcoming Chris from Wissett who is an amateur archaeologist and he will be joined by his wife Marylyn.

We are hoping to hold a Coffee Morning in early May to raise funds so that we can contribute to the excellent work that the MU does in many parts of the world. We do hope that this event will be supported by our readers! More details next month.

Margaret G (01502 478378)

Wissett

Correspondent Mary Pester

01986 835869

marypester@rocketmail.com

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.



Thank you to all who came to our Epiphany Service. The church looked lovely with the Christmas greenery lit by candlelight. The Nativity figures, joined then by the Magi will stay until Candlemas is celebrated on January 28th this year.

Then February when, hopefully, we will have days like this, clear, cold and bright...

"Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright," and, hopefully, see snowdrops, aconites and the first crocus and hear more birds begin to sing.

My new diary informs me that, on 27th, we remember George Herbert who died on February 27th in 1633 of consumption, shortly before his 40th birthday. He advises in his "The Country Parson", "That the church be swept, and kept cleane without dust, or cobwebs, and at great festivals strawed, and stuck with boughs, and perfumed with incense."

We manage well with the sweeping and dusting, decorating with flowers, no incense but sometimes the smell of polish spray left in the air.

I wonder if George Herbert knew of Church Clipping? Quoting from "The Country Parson" again he advises to be, "a Lover of old Costumes, if they be good and harmlesse."

As the cover article of this month's *BVTimes* reports, Clipping is certainly an old custom and the word is Anglo Saxon in origin, derived from "Clyppan", meaning to embrace or clasp. To clip the church is to encircle, embrace, hug

the church to show love for the church and the surrounding people. Love for the place and the parish. I know, speaking to many people in Wissett, that the church building is loved. And so of course are the people and place.

The tradition of Clipping is rare. Wissett revived it in 1998, I believe, and has carried it on.

We have it on Shrove Tuesday and, in the past, have then had pancakes for all in the Village Hall. I am not sure that we will be able to use the hall this year, but we will, as is usual in Wissett, have refreshments after the service.

Look out for further information, this year Shrove Tuesday is on February 13th.

Please do come and join in the Clipping at St Andrew's Wissett, one of only a few churches still to enjoy this old custom.

Then Lent with no flowers but still church cleaning in February:

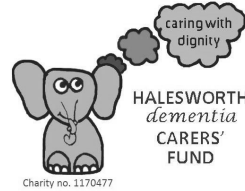
- 4th Charlotte Pringle and Jane Parry.
- 11th Veronica Catchpole and Janice Bathgate.
- 18th Mary Pester and Camilla Prior.
- 25th Kathleen Witherby.

The PCC and Kathleen thank Cara Wetmore for all her help with cleaning in the past.

We do need more help in keeping the church clean with the sweeping and dusting although you will be pleased to know that there is not longer straw used at great festivals although there is still straw in the crib under the altar but that will be removed.

When I was looking up Clipping I read that when the celebration is held early in the year it may have been thought to bring good luck for the year ahead. Listening to the news this morning I feel we all need that but even more importantly hope and love.

Best wishes to you all.



HALESWORTH DEMENTIA CARERS' FUND

Happy New Year from HDCF

The new Family Carers Support Group has got off to a great start. Designed to give support to people who have family members with dementia, and in conjunction with the Pear Tree Fund, it meets every Friday in the Co-op Community Room from 2pm to 3.30pm.

A new group which we are hoping to start on February 9th is Seated Tap Dancing. Led by dance teacher Garth, and again in conjunction with the Pear Tree Fund, it will be every Friday in the Co-op Community Room from 11.30am to 12.30pm.

For details of all our groups please call 01986 874442 or email: info@halesworthdementia.co.uk

In addition to the groups mentioned above we are still running our Seated Movement to Music Group every Monday at Holton Village Hall from 11am to 12.15pm; Memory Café every Tuesday in the Community Café from 2pm to 3.30pm, and Singing With Friends every other Wednesday at Holton Village Hall from 2pm to 3.30pm. These groups are all open to helping people with memory problems and their family carers.

Film Shows

We shall continue to hold our bi-monthly film shows at The Cut. These are held on the third Wednesday of the month and are in January, March, May, July, September and November.

100+ Club

This now stands at 118 members, and prizes of £100, £70 and £30 are drawn monthly. The winning numbers for January are 36, 66 and 17. If we get to 125 members we will be able to increase the monthly prize allocation so if you would like to join us please contact Anna on 07721842802

John Wood

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For more information contact: Revd Alison Alder at:
alisonalder@hotmail.co.uk or 01502 478855

Future meeting: Monday 8th April

Friends of St Mary's - St Mary The Virgin Church, Halesworth - A little bit of history: 4. The Clerical Connection: Part 3

Our next clerical connection is Robert Edward Hankinson (1798-1868), from a family of clerics, who studied, as did his two brothers, at Cambridge. After several curacies, he became rector at Halesworth cum Chediston 1850-1863, also through the patronage of Elizabeth Badeley. He officiated at the marriage of his daughter, Marion, with Revd Samuel Blois Turner, previously described who mounted the John Browne brasses at the church. Revd Hankinson instituted many of the changes made to the church building, including restoration of the chancel, replacement of the high-backed pews, removal of the north and south galleries, rebuilding of the outer north aisle and replacement of the inner north aisle roof; he himself gave the glazing for the new aisle windows. The railway came to Halesworth during Revd Hankinson's time, and a little point of interest is that on 13 March 1959 he baptised George Lansbury, the son of a railway timekeeper, who was born in Halesworth and went on to become an MP and led the Labour Party 1932-1935.

After this restoration, the service at the re-opening of the church was conducted by Revd Vincent Stanton (1817-1891) who succeeded Revd Hankinson as rector. Revd Stanton also studied at Cambridge; he worked as a tutor in China, was imprisoned for four months by the Chinese during the Opium War and served as the first colonial chaplain of Hong Kong until ill-health brought him back to Britain. He was rector of Halesworth cum Chediston from 1863-88.

Revd Stanton was followed by the Revd Abbot Roland Upcher (1849 -1929), again the son of a cleric and who followed his father to Cambridge, where he was known for his sporting prowess. Ordained in 1874, and after various curacies he was inducted at Halesworth cum Chediston in 1889, where he and his wife, Alice née Winstanley, added two sons to their family of four daughters. Whilst Revd Upcher was at Halesworth, even more restoration was carried out, including preparation

for the installation of the present organ in the former chantry chapel of the Argentein family in 1893. In 1889 the curious Dane Stones were found in three broken sections behind rubble inside the old chancel arch; they have been dated as late 9th-century, possibly from the Saxon church which stood on the site at the time of the Norman Conquest. They have been interpreted as hands grasping leafy boughs to ward off evil, and may be part of a cross shaft, but, if rearranged, bear a striking resemblance to figures of mermen grasping double tails found, particularly around fonts, in other churches. Revd Upcher had them randomly re-set on the south side of the altar under the credence table where they can be puzzled over today. And, a little aside, Upcher is also remembered, as a keen angler, for the invention of the 'Upcher Fly'!

A last look at the Clerical Connection next time.

Jenny Janes

*Again, the main source is the book by Michael and Sheila Gooch, *The People of a Suffolk Town: Halesworth 1100 – 1900*.

Family Carers Support Group

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


Charity No. 1170477



Every Friday 2-3.30pm
Co-op Community Room
info@halesworthdementia.co.uk
In partnership with the Pear Tree Fund




The Pear Tree Fund

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 Your donation goes towards the work of the BVTM across the Team



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

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Proceeds to local charities.

"HALESWORTH STREET and PLACE NAMES"

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"MEMORIES & STORIES OF OLD HALESWORTH"

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Proceeds to St Mary's Halesworth Regeneration etc.

"The LIFE and TIMES of DEREK NEWBY"

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For more information, see Derek Newby You Tube and www.newbysofhalesworth.com



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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.

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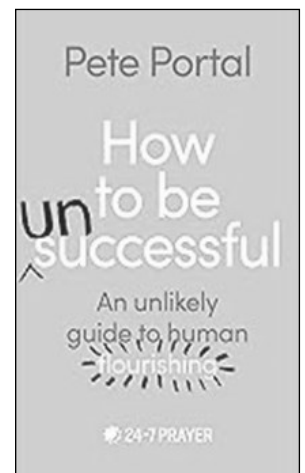
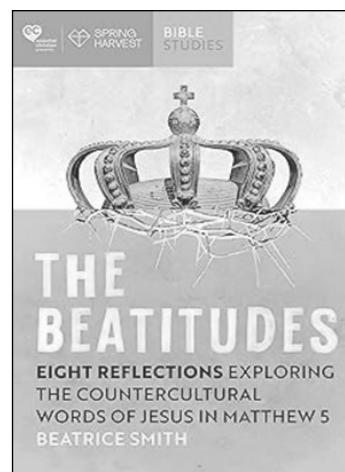
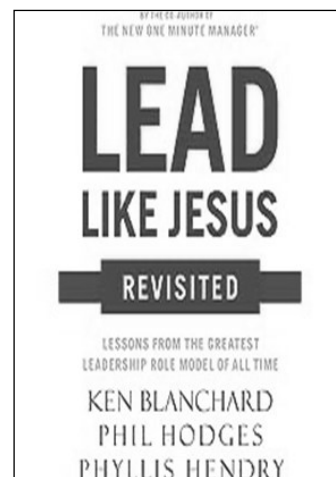
**SIGN OF THE FISH is open: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays 9.30am – 1pm;
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Happy and Blessed, or Strength in Weakness?

February already, “Christmas” has been packed away for another year for nearly a month, and new year’s resolutions probably forgotten for nearly as long. I always feel a little... sad? flat? deflated? when the twinkling lights around town and in the home go out, how lovely it would be if we could remember the light of the world a little longer, throughout January as did our ancestors who didn’t take down their Christmas greenery until Candlemas, 40 days after Christmas (February 2nd), when they commemorated the presentation of the infant Jesus at the Temple in Jerusalem; but after all we are modern and cannot afford the electricity, and have to worry about our carbon footprint, and 21st Century everyday life has to go on!

For many Christians part of the rhythm of everyday life, apart from church attendance and personal devotions is meeting regularly with Christian friends in fellowship groups (aka home groups) to study the Bible in more depth. We are studying **The Beatitudes**, (with the help of) **eight reflections exploring the countercultural words of Jesus in Matthew 5** by **Beatrice Smith**: by January we had reached verse 5, blessed are the meek, or humble, depending on which translation one is using. The original New Testament Greek word was **praus**, which has no direct equivalent in English and is much more nuanced than either “meek” or “humble”, both of which have changed in emphasis since the 17th century, so we had plenty to chew over and discuss, certainly there is nothing wishy-washy, weak or passive in the concept. If we are to emulate Jesus “servant leadership” may give a better idea of the qualities required, which leads me neatly on to the very readable **Lead like Jesus**, by **Ken Blanchard et al.** (there is a copy in Sign of the Fish bookshop). Anyone who has been on a management course at work has probably come across Ken Blanchard’s work and theories: I was enormously encouraged, somewhat late in the day (I have been retired quite a while now!) to learn Blanchard has found that all successful leadership characteristics are modelled on the leadership style of Jesus. In our success-oriented world we are expected to “sell” ourselves, to “big ourselves up”: this is neither humble not meek, nor will it bring the blessing of an

abundant life, as **Pete Portal** explains in his recent book **How to be (un)successful: an unlikely guide to human flourishing**. This comes highly recommended by a friend who received a copy for Christmas, and I’m looking forward to reading it myself, meanwhile the author has written an article with the same title for the January issue of **Christianity** magazine, giving some of his back story.



Be happy and blessed in 2024!

Val Jennings

For Sign of the Fish

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THE ARTS SOCIETY, SOUTHWOLD

Tuesday 13th February: Sport of the Gods: Olympia and the Ancient Olympics. *Lecturer: James Russell*

Tuesday 12th March: "As if by Magic": The Secrets of Turner's Watercolour Techniques. *Lecturer: Nicola Moorby*
Lectures commence at 2pm in Southwold Arts Centre (St Edmund's Hall), Cumberland Road, Southwold.

Visitors and Members' guests welcome, at an entrance fee of £8

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The Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin Halesworth

2024 concert / events highlights

Wednesday, 28 February
12.30pm

Community Lunch
Everyone is welcome to join us for lunch

Wednesday, 13 March
12noon for 12.30pm

2024 LUNCHTIME RECITAL SERIES BEGINS
A lunchtime recital organised by the Friends of St. Mary's
FREE ENTRY / retiring collection / refreshments / bring your own lunch

Saturday, 23 March
10.30am

Walk the Way of the Cross
Team Rector Dominic Doble & others will lead a pilgrimage presenting a short contemplation at each Church in the team, join us at 10.30am in St. Marys

28, 29, 30 March
10am - 4pm daily

CHEDISTON ART GROUP
We welcome back the Chediston Art Group for a art exhibition.
Paintings, cards, prints & more to look, ponder & buy!

Friday, 5 April
7pm

CHANTER'S JIGGE CONCERT
Songs, ayres, jigs and jollies from around Europe and across the centuries played and sung with ancient traditional and modern instruments

Saturday, 6 April
12noon for 12.30pm

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

11th - 14th April
www.inkfestival.org

INK FESTIVAL
The UK's leading producer of original short plays take over St. Mary's for a few days! Festival details available soon

Saturday, 20 April
2.30pm

ST. GEORGE'S DAY PARADE & CIVIC SERVICE
We welcome the community for a Parade & Civic Service
The Archdeacon of Suffolk will be preaching

Monday, 22 April
7pm

THE BOHEMIAN CHOIR - TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF LIBEREC
A joy to welcome back the girls choir from Liberec to Suffolk.
Programme to follow

Wednesday, 8 May
12noon for 12.30pm

Sopranos Veronica Downing & Wendy Slaney give May's recital
A lunchtime recital organised by the Friends of St. Mary's
FREE ENTRY / retiring collection / refreshments / bring your own lunch

Wednesday, 12 June
12noon for 12.30pm

Patrick Crooke & Ben Payne - Violin & Viola
A lunchtime recital organised by the Friends of St. Mary's
FREE ENTRY / retiring collection / refreshments / bring your own lunch

Saturday, 3 August
timings tbc

BREAD AND WINE FESTIVAL
The second Lammas Bread & Wine Festival is confirmed
Stalls, local producers, worship & more

Friday, 6 December
7pm

LADY MAISERY CONCERT - 'AWAKE ARISE'
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