



Blyth Valley Times

Church in Community—Community in Church

August 2026

Edmund's Ordination

£1.50

(where sold)

The Ordination

On Saturday 27th of June 'our curate' Edmund was ordained as a priest by Bishop Joanne in a special service at St Edmundsbury Cathedral. As a priest Edmund can now officiate at the Holy Communion and announce God's blessing at various services and occasions. This authority shows that he has a special ministry of leadership and service among us, and comes at the end of a long period of preparation and discernment. Many of us went to the cathedral, or followed the service as it was streamed. Edmund said that he was very moved at the moment of ordination, as I think many of us were too! We give him our best wishes and prayers for his ministry in the Church.

First Holy Communion

On the Sunday following his ordination Edmund was celebrant at his first Holy Communion service, celebrating the Feast of St Peter. For this Edmund had some music he loved, and also decided to sing parts of the Holy Communion from the ancient Plainsong tradition. Vetta Wise is much to be thanked in preparing Edmund for singing, as is the Aurora Consort, conducted by Vetta, who led parts of the service with Byrd's Four Part Mass and Bruckner's beautiful Locus Iste during Communion. The gratitude and best wishes of the Blyth Valley Churches was shown in the generosity of the gifts presented by Dominic at the end of Edmund's first team service the following week, and there were cakes and an 'after party' at the Angel Hotel!

Keith Noakes



More photos on the back page...

Take a look inside this month's *BVTimes* magazine for local news items and details of services and events happening across the Blyth Valley Churches and further afield.

Blyth Valley Times is published monthly by Blyth Valley Churches.

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You can also request a postal subscription, costing £40 a year.

Telephone 01986 875941/07752 275328 or email: blyth.valley.times@gmail.com for further details

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August Lectionary

Sunday the 2nd

Holy Communion – The Ninth Sunday after Trinity (Green)

Rom. 9.1-5 (NRSV)

Matt. 14.13-21 (NRSV)

Traditional Communion – The Ninth Sunday after Trinity (Green)

1 Cor. 10.1-13 (KJV)

Luke 16.1-9 (KJV)

Sunday the 9th

Holy Communion – The Tenth Sunday after Trinity (Green)

Rom. 10.5-15 (NRSV)

Matt. 14.22-33 (NRSV)

Traditional Communion – The Tenth Sunday after Trinity (Green)

1 Cor. 12.1-11 (KJV)

Luke 19.41-47a (KJV)

Sunday the 16th

Holy Communion – The Eleventh Sunday after Trinity (Green)

Rom. 11.1-2a, 29-32 (NRSV)

Matt. 15. (10-20) 21-28 (NRSV)

Traditional Communion – The Eleventh Sunday after Trinity (Green)

1 Cor. 15.1-11 (KJV)

Luke 18.9-14 (KJV)

Sunday the 23rd

Holy Communion – The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity (Green)

Rom. 12.1-8 (NRSV)

Matt. 16.13-20 (NRSV)

Traditional Communion – The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity (Green)

2 Cor. 3.4-9 (KJV)

Mark 7.31-37 (KJV)

Sunday the 30th

Holy Communion – The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity (Green)

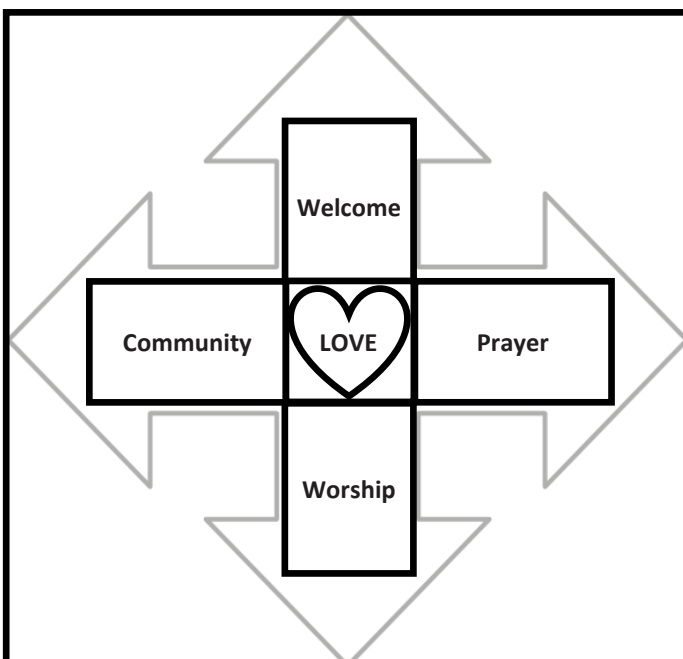
Rom. 12.9-end (NRSV)

Matt. 16.21-end (NRSV)

Traditional Communion – The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity (Green)

Gal. 3.16-22 (KJV)

Luke 10.23b-37 (KJV)



Worship in the Blyth Valley in August 2026					
CW – Year A Continuous New Testament	2 nd CW & BCP – Ninth after Trinity	9 th CW & BCP – Tenth after Trinity	16 th CW & BCP – Eleventh After Trinity	23 rd CW & BCP – Twelfth After Trinity	30 th CW & BCP – Thirteenth After Trinity
Halesworth St Mary	10am Holy Communion Linda and Pauline	8am Traditional Communion Dominic 10am Family Service Pauline	8am Traditional Communion Dominic 10am Iona Worship Jason 6pm Evensong Dominic	8am Traditional Communion Dominic 10am Holy Communion Dominic	
St Peter Group					
Holton St Peter		10am Morning Prayer Chris and Gary Atkins	10am Holy Communion Dominic	6pm Praise Service Edmund	
Wenhaston St Peter		10:30am Joint Service at Methodist Chapel	10am Holy Communion Linda		
Bramfield St Andrew		10am Holy Communion Edmund		10am Family Service Pauline	
Blyford All Saints			10am Wild Church Alison		
Thorington St Peter				10am Morning Prayer Linda	
St Andrew Grp					
Wissett St Andrew		10am Morning Prayer Veronica M	10am Holy Communion Edmund	6pm Evensong Dominic	
Chediston St Mary		10am Morning Prayer Vic		10am Holy Communion Edmund	
Spexhall St Peter					10am Holy Communion Vic
Linstead St Margaret		10am Holy Communion Dominic			
St Michael Grp					
Cookley St Michael		6pm Evensong Roy Tricker			
Heveningham St Margaret		10am Pet Service Jim			
Huntingfield St Mary				10am Iona Jenny	
Walpole St Mary		10am Morning Prayer Alison			

Additional services this month: 9:30am Tuesdays, Morning Prayer, St Peter's, Spexhall + 10am Wednesdays, Holy Communion, St Mary's, Halesworth + 9:30am Thursdays, Morning Prayer, St Andrew's, Bramfield

Wenhaston Methodist Church

Coles Lane, Wenhaston

Minister: The Revd Martin Keenan

27 Meadow Gardens, Beccles, NR34 9PA.

Tel: 07921 540170

2nd August Mrs Laura Lawrance-Martin and Mrs S Barker

9th August United Service Rev. Pam Bayliss

16th August Rev Martin Keenan

23rd August Rev I McKillop

30th August Mrs Lizzie Zukiewicz

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

Sunday 2nd August 2026

11.00am Gathered Worship Rev Alex Jacob

Tuesday 4th August 2026

10am to 12 noon Coffee morning at Lowestoft, followed by Morning Worship

Friday 7th August 2026

9.30am Prayer Meeting in the Church and followed by Coffee Morning

Sunday 9th August 2026

11.00am Gathered Worship Elizabeth

3pm BRAMFIELD CHAPEL

Sunday 16th August 2026

11.00am Gathered Worship Paul Potts

Tuesday 18th August 2026

10am to 12 noon Coffee morning at Lowestoft, followed by Morning Worship

Friday 21st August 2026

9.30am Prayer Meeting in the Church, followed by Coffee Morning

Sunday 23rd August 2026

11.00am Gathered Worship TBA

Tuesday 25th August 2026

10am to 12 noon Coffee morning at Lowestoft, followed by Morning Worship

Friday 28th August 2026

9.30am Prayer Meeting in the Church followed by Coffee Morning

Sunday 30th August 2026

11.00am Gathered Worship

TBA



From the Rector...

I write with Edmund's ordination fresh in my mind. He has been on quite a journey to get him to where he is. Yet, he has only just begun. He may have decided to not even set out along the road when he first heard the call if he'd perceived it as one single movement. Or indeed if he'd realised all the false horizons and detours that would be involved. I can't speak for him, but in my experience even the preliminary chapter between thinking the thought and meeting the staff member responsible for vicar recruiting is quite long. It has both practical and emotional elements. Who do I contact? How? What must I do to prepare? What should I, or shouldn't I, say? Will they laugh at me? What are the next steps? Will I have the time? Is that actually what God wants for me? That is only the preface to the story. It is an epic saga!

We recently had the privilege of being able to holiday in sun, wind and rain in temperatures 10 to twenty degrees cooler than they have been here. The fact that it was a long drive may have put us off if we had needed to do it in one hit. A couple of years ago we did, more or less, the same return trip in 12 hours. This time however we chopped the route up into bite sized chunks. Preparations required researching and booking a dog friendly self-catering place at our chosen destination on the Islands of Harris and Lewis. We booked the cat in locally. We booked a couple of stops: one with friends, one at a hotel. We booked the ferry. Not unlike turning a stitched soft-toy inside out and stuffing it, the drive fulfilled the plan. At the last, finding the cottage was not straightforward. It was not until we managed to get the key out of the front door, close it and get the kettle on that we were finally able to relax. Yet, as those of you who follow us on Facebook will have seen it was worth every pound and every mile.

One of the crazy things about life is that while some are heading out on holiday others are facing quite different pathways. Indeed, just yesterday Deanery Synod heard about the Church of England Farewill deal to support the free online writing of wills. This is one of those things that often the well defer until too late, alongside setting up Power of Attorney and Care Plans. In tandem with these practicalities, we also face an emotional journey, especially when death is imminent. As with the other pathways we are considering, seeing the road ahead as a sequence of milestones can make the awfulness even just a little bit easier to endure. We may have daily routines of

listening to the Archers or watching the news. We may decide not only to go ahead with what might be our last weekend break to the caravan, but also to splash out a bit to make it even more of a special memory.

Chopping up the interminable future, however short, into daily chunks can help here as it can in abusive or addictive situations that would otherwise be unbearable.

Journeying on holidays - whether we are visiting Callanish Standing Stones or St Clements Rodel - has a spiritual component. Not just because the word comes from 'religious festival' 'holy day'. Journeying towards death, likewise, may be assisted by a rhythm of prayer or faith that gives confidence, makes sense, or provides hope or escape. The awareness of the end may be liberating and grant time and context for an entirely new faith; or simply its renewing. Throughout scripture and Christian tradition both death and faith have been woven into stories of movement. Paul's missionary journeys. The Santiago de Compostela. 'I am going to prepare a place for you'. The Exodus. Here too the idea of me getting to heaven (whatever that means) from where I am now seems an impossibility. Certainly in one fell swoop. Yet I would hope that for you too, it appears a little more likely if we break it down into manageable mouthfuls. Perhaps, opening a Bible - even online, following a service, downloading an app may be enough for now. We could run a Baptism or Confirmation course for you in time. You may be considering ministry and need an introduction to the recruiting Sargent, or you are struggling with an essay or some other element of your training. Where ever you are on your faith or life journey, do make the travelling as much a part of the experience as the arriving at the destination. Mark the steps, make time for celebration and reflection; and know that we are here for you!

Dominic



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HALESWORTH & BRAMFIELD UNITED REFORMED CHURCHES

In June, Jean and I spent a week in Lazio, the region of Italy that includes Rome. For the most part we stayed in Nettuno, close to Anzio, which, for those who know their war history, is where the Allies undertook a beach landing during World War Two. While we were staying there, we visited the American War Cemetery, where close to eight thousand American War dead are interred. The cemetery is a green and peaceful 'oasis' when compared to the parched and busy landscape beyond its walls. Whilst there, we also visited a small museum, where the stories of some of those who fell are preserved.

Among the books I took on holiday with me was 'No Greater Story – Rediscovering your place in God's epic adventure', by Leon Evans. I bought this book at Spring Harvest last year, when it was the book to accompany the main talks. Leon is an expert on the Old Testament Book of Isaiah, and he skilfully demonstrates how Isaiah is a book for all times.

Sometimes described as the 'Romans' of the Old Testament, it's like the Bible in miniature. The first thirty-nine chapters dwell on the judgement of God, whereas the remaining twenty-seven chapters focus on God consoling his people. It's second only to The Psalms in the number of times Jesus quotes from it; and Paul mines it more than any other book when trying to describe the Messiah's mission, and God's grace to the Gentiles.

Leon Evans discusses the features that make a good story: a beginning, a middle and an end; but more than that, a compelling plot-line involving tension and suspense, that leads ultimately to a surprising yet deeply satisfying ending.

Reflecting on our visit to the American war cemetery, the seemingly endless rows of crosses (mostly crosses) stand testimony to the grim sacrifice of so many lives. Few, if any of us, get to write the life story we choose for ourselves. Rather, more often than not, our stories get hijacked or derailed by other people or unforeseen circumstances. I'm thinking, not only of servicemen, but of people who acquire life-threatening or life-limiting diseases, and families who lose a child. And I'm also reflecting on the other end of life's spectrum, when people lose a sibling or a soul-mate.

Redemption seems to be the key to understanding Jesus' story. It would be a tragedy without the resurrection. But, instead, in rising again, he defeated death! And that, it seems to me, gives us hope to rewrite our own story. Regardless of how it may look right now, if we can see our story enfolded in the overarching narrative of Christ — his birth, death and resurrection — we will find faith and love, to live in hope!

Like other empires before and since, the Roman Empire relied on slave labour. And over many centuries, millions of conquered people have been uprooted from their families and neighbourhoods. Where could they find hope in a foreign land? Isaiah has an answer: "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned." (Is.9:2); "The Spirit of the sovereign LORD is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour, ... to comfort all who mourn." (Is.61:1-2); "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (John 10:10). Photo on p.23.

Peter Wagg, Elder



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**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**

**HALESWORTH
COMMUNITY
LARDER PROJECT**

ST MARY'S CHURCH HALL
Church Farm Lane, Halesworth IP19 8SY

**Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays
10am - 11.30am**

Curate's Corner

There is a lovely idea in Orthodox Christianity, namely that a Christian Church has the authority to say where grace is, not where God's grace is not. Ministers of the Orthodox Churches are able to say that the sacraments conferred by their priests really are true sacraments and that their teachings really are true Christianity. But if asked whether the same is true of the Church of England, they have always said to me something of the form: "We cannot use our authority to declare that God's grace is working here, but that does not mean that God is not at work here – it's just that we can't certify it for you." They have always been very nice about it; they're quite happy to say that God may well make himself truly present in an Anglican Communion Service and would certainly never say that God was not present in our Holy Communion, but neither will they give their absolute endorsement to the Church of England.

The Church of England is able to say the same. As a minister of the Church of England, I will confidently and with total conviction say that the sacraments ministered within the Church of England are individually necessary and jointly sufficient for salvation. I will gladly teach the faith as the Church of England has received it, truly believing that it is the faith handed down to us from the apostles. I would even be slightly more daring than my Orthodox friends and say that the true faith is also practiced in a variety of other Christian churches. But I also reserve the right to do exactly what my Orthodox friends do: to say in some cases "I cannot lend my authority to you and certify that God's grace is working within your community. It may be that it is, but you will have to find the confidence to believe it for yourself, without appealing to the authority of another denomination."

My point is that human beings crave certainty when it comes to religion. We want to be able to point to some objective fact that reassures us and tells us that all is right with God. We want to pretend that we have control of our encounters with the divine, rather than admit that we stand at the foothills of a divine mystery which pierces the clouds and disappears beyond our ability to comprehend. We want a license to stop our faith from wrestling with doubt, and if all the major churches of the earth spoke in support of the Church of England it would certainly scratch an itch within us. But in truth, it would be a very poor substitute for true faith. The Church of England, like many other churches, possesses a limited degree of authority borne of scripture and tradition, which allows us to say with sufficient confidence that God looks kindly upon our own worship. But this is not at all like the standards of earthly certainty we secretly crave.

Today, we find ourselves in a multi-denominational and multi-faith world. We want certainty that we are doing what God wishes of us, and we actually need enough confidence to assert that the Church of England has a right and duty to exist as a part of God's Church upon earth. But in this age, we are more aware than ever before of all the many religious traditions that surround us. Many of those traditions would like us to lend our voices to support their beliefs, and that is not always something we can do with a clear conscience. And so I commend to you this thought from my Orthodox friends: that the Church of England can speak with authority about itself, that we remain open to the reality that God is certainly present outside our walls, and that we do not have to lend our authority to others and certify the existence of the divine in any specific place beyond our borders. But let us not forget the reality of the situation: we are at the foothills of a mystery, surrounded by the great cloud of unknowing. With fear and trepidation I dare to say that God is present upon our altars, but may I never be foolish enough to say where God is not.



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LIFE EVENTS

From the Registers

Funerals/Interment of Ashes

John Bedser at Holton

Sylvia Hunt at Halesworth

David Whitwood at Walpole

Baptism

Olive Kent at Halesworth

Marriage

Kerridge and MacClean at Huntingfield



If you need help from Waveney Foodbank you will need a referral voucher.

Just call one of our partner agencies:

Citizens Advice National Helpline

0808 208 2138

South Norfolk Early Help Hub

01508 533933

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.

August at Halesworth Library

We have lots of activities planned over the summer to keep your children occupied. On Wednesday 5th August we welcome Mini Monsters to the library with their creepy crawly roadshow. £1 per child, booking required. Choose between our morning session (11:30-12:30) or afternoon session (1:30-2:30). On Wednesday 12th August we welcome local artist Anita Andrews (1:00-3:00pm) for a craft workshop, again £1 per child, booking required. Anita will also be running an all day workshop on Friday 21st August, 10:00-3:00pm, showing children (aged 8+) how to create their own notebooks. Lunch provided, £1 per child, please book in advance. On Wednesday 26th August (10:00-11:00) we are hosting a rainbow fish craft club, FREE but booking is required. Please book at the library for all these events! We are also hosting a themed Lego club, every Tuesday during the summer holidays between 11:15-12:15. Drop in session, no booking required. Not forgetting the Reading Quest which runs everyday through the summer holidays – drop in between 10:00-12:00 and 2:00-4:00pm to speak with our dedicated volunteers.

The library hosts regular activities and drop-ins. Come and join us every Tuesday, 10-10:30, for a free Rhyme Time session to sing fun songs! Refreshments also provided for parents! Wednesdays from 10am our Time Out sociable group for older people meet for tea and biscuits. The Knit & Natter group meet alternate Tuesdays, 2:30-4:30pm. We also have a new Mah-jong group that meet on the first Friday of the month, 2:00-4:00pm. At this early stage, the group is open to experienced players and if you have your own Mah-jong set, please bring it along with you. Lego Club runs every Saturday, 11:00-12:00, and Family Fun Time every Sunday, 10:30-11:30. You can also drop in for advice from the East Suffolk Council customer services team every Tuesday, 10:00-16:00, and Citizens Advice are here alternate Tuesdays, 10-12:00. Please ask a member of staff for more details.

The Friends of Halesworth Library are inviting you to join us for Sociable Sundays on 9th and 23rd August, to meet new people and enjoy a chat over cake and a cuppa in the library! Pop in anytime between 10:30-12:30pm. Suggested donation £1 to the Friends of the library who kindly volunteer to run these events.

And finally! Did you know that the library can deliver books and audiobooks straight to your door? If you're unable to visit the library, one of our friendly volunteers can come to you. Please contact us on 01986 506062 for more details.

Catherine Draper

Wisett Village Hall

Fitted kitchen, crockery/cutlery and chairs/tables for 50 people, fully licensed, soft lighting option, excellent heating, free WiFi, projector and screen.

For more information and to book go to:
www.wisettvillagehall.org.uk

The Treasures of our Churches

A series in which Edmund explores some of the lesser-known jewels of the Blyth Valley Churches...

Altar frontals are the material – often lavishly decorated material – which hangs over the front of the altar. They are often gifted to churches: sometimes by patrons, and sometimes in memory of a departed loved one. Those of us who spend much of our lives in churches can find our eyes skimming over them. But if we slow down a little, we find that they have something to teach us about the way a church understands itself. At St Margaret's Church, Heveningham, you may see a deep blue frontal being used during Advent. When I enquired, I was told that it was likely a gift from the Vanneck family, who held Heveningham Hall for around 363 years and therefore had a very deep connection to the church. The deep blue colour of the frontal is a distant remembrance of pre-reformation English religious practice. Between the 10th and 13th centuries, a common understanding of which colours were appropriate to which religious seasons started to emerge, with a general understanding that violet would be the best colour for Advent. Violet was, after all, the colour of funerals in the later Roman Empire. But as it turns out, purple was also a monstrously expensive colour to manufacture, especially if one wanted to dye any quantity of material. So the colour that actually went under the name "violet" was either a deep blue or a very dark red. England – by and large – settled on a very particular shade of blue. This was all forgotten about from the 16th century right through to the 19th, but since then there has been an interest in reviving the distinct blue hue of English Advent. Although a very small thing, having a distinctly English colour-scheme really does help us to remember that we are one part of a larger whole. We have the same Bible as our Christian brothers and sisters across the world, but a system of colours which is altogether English. We have received the same faith that has been proclaimed across the world, but here in England, we have received it in a very distinctly English way.



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Community Car Service

Our service offers transport for medical appointments, shopping trips and essential outings ensuring people remain independent, stay connected and able to meet their everyday needs. From 1st July 2026 our new mileage rate is now 80p per mile. If you would like to discuss this further or would like to enquire about the Community Car Service, please give us a call on – 01986 874290 or email carservice@halesworthvc.co.uk

Isolation Busters

Isolation Busting is about combatting loneliness by bringing people together through befriending, lunches, afternoon teas and trips. If you would like to discover more about Isolation Busters, our programme of events and dates, befriending or shopping support please give us a call on 01986 875600 or email info@halesworthvolunteers.org.

Halesworth Community Larder

We are delighted to welcome our new Foodwise Project Officer, Jo Drury, to the HV team. A big thank you to Charlotte Coby for all her hard work and commitment over the last year as our Foodwise Project Officer. The Larder continues to support people by offering a range of fresh produce and kitchen cupboard essentials at the bargain price of £3 per basket. Open to everyone, the Larder is available at St Mary's Church Hall every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday, 10.00-11.30. Our volunteers look forward to welcoming you, for shopping and for tea or coffee and chat afterwards. Thank you to everyone who regularly donates, this makes a huge difference and helps us to keep our shelves stocked. If you would like to find out more or to make a donation please email – larder@halesworthvolunteers.org.

Upcoming Event Dates

Westhall Racehorse 80s Musical Bingo and Disco – **Thursday 24th September** - We are pleased to be joining Brenda and the team at the Westhall Racehorse for a fun 80s-themed fundraising evening. Come and have a go at 80s musical bingo and a bop with the disco.

Halesworth Golf Club, Charity Golf Day – **Friday 16th October** – To celebrate our 40th anniversary we are hosting our first charity golf day! There will be a bacon bap and coffee on arrival and a one-course meal after play. For enquiries and an entry form and for completed forms please contact – info@halesworthvolunteers.org. If you are a business and would be able to sponsor a hole, or make a donation, we will advertise your company at the event. Please do get in touch. Raffle prizes would be greatly appreciated too. We will be at the Gold Club for the event, with more information about HV and the work we do within the community. Hopefully we will see lots of you golfers on the day.

Karen Kerridge

Director



Walpole Old Chapel



Walpole Old Chapel is a unique building, created c1690 by local people out of an existing farmhouse.

We are open to the public on Saturday and Bank Holiday afternoons from 2pm - 4.30pm from 4th April until 26th September. Further events are:

Sunday 7th June 3pm *The Dollard Collectief - Voices through the Trees: The Northwestern Seaboard Down the Ages.*

Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th June 11am – 5pm *Suffolk Open Studios. Grace Adam, artist in residence.*

Saturday 13th June 12 noon – 2pm. *Drawing Workshop.*

Sunday 12th July 3pm. *Blake Morrison and the Hosepipe Band.*

Sunday 9th August 3pm. *Here's the Summer Lovekyn Consort.*

Sunday 16th August 10:30am-5pm. *Sings the Chapels Weekend.*

Sunday 23rd August 3pm. *Music on a Summer's Afternoon.*

Sunday 6th September 3pm. *Tin Foil Aliens.*

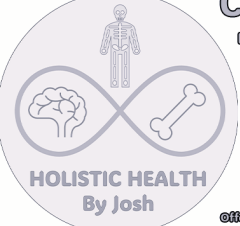
Saturday 12th September 10am-4:30pm *Heritage Open Day.*

Saturday 19th September 4pm. *Harvest Festival.*

Grace Adam is Artist in Residence March to September. Exhibition open Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th September 11am-4pm. October 11am-3pm on Fridays 9th-30th and Saturdays 10th–31st. Also Thursday 29th October.

To book tickets before the event, go to ticketsource.co.uk Walpole Old Chapel for tickets @ £12, or pay £15 on the door.

Contact: info@walpoleoldchapel.org
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www.walpoleoldchapel.org/programme



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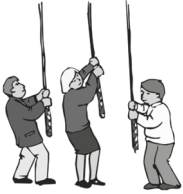
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From the Ringing Chamber

It's been quite a quiet month thanks to the hot weather and people being away. We notched up another Surprise Minor quarter peal at Wissett but, with Pete away, we opted for a relatively straightforward one, Berwick, which didn't cause us too much trouble. We also played safe with our monthly quarter at Halesworth and the Plain Bob Triples we rang was almost completely error-free for the whole 48 minutes.

Edmund's first service as a "fully-qualified vicar" was enough to get everyone out of bed and to Halesworth to celebrate the occasion. We had to pull in some reinforcements from outside BVC, and that got St Mary's bells rung on a Sunday morning for the first time in months. Heveningham, Wenhaston and Huntingfield have been the venues for the other Sunday sessions in July.

Tuesday practices continue to be progressive with a wide range of five and six bell methods rung at Blythburgh/Wenhaston. Some of Beccles' new recruits have been joining us recently, which is not only good for them but also good for us as they bring their mentor with them, so we have an extra experienced ringer.

We still desperately need some new ringers! Everyone over the age of 21 that I have ever taught has said "I wish I'd started this years ago". Don't wait until you have more time on your hands (you never will!) or you retire (by which time you're almost too old) or the children leave home (they can't afford to) – get in touch and give it a go now. halesworthbells@gmail.com is what it says on the banner.

PJG



Christian Aid Week – 2026

As a result of another successful Christian Aid Week, a total sum of £3312 was sent to Christian Aid to support its work in enabling some of the world's poorest people to sustain themselves and to improve their situation and that of their community. Of this £1124 was Gift-Aided, so that an additional £281 (25%) will be recovered in Income Tax by Christian Aid, giving them a total benefit of £3593.

Most of the donations were made through Church Services, unlike previous years when a significant amount was contributed through the door-to-door delivery of envelopes.

On behalf of the Halesworth and District Christian Aid Group, I should like to say a sincere "Thank You" to everyone who donated so generously and helped, in whatever way, to achieve this very satisfactory outcome.

Chris Dunn (Local Treasurer)

A New and Exciting Initiative Sweeping the Country...

The People's Emergency Briefing is a film followed by a facilitated and friendly discussion on the implications and opportunities for us locally. It will be screened:

At – St Mary's Church, Halesworth IP19 8LL

**On – Thursday 10 September 7.30 – 9.30pm
(50 min film)**

Please book a free ticket at: <https://buytickets.at/ecochurchgroupstmaryshalesworth/2314415>



In November 2025, over 1200 MPs, peers and leaders from business, culture, faith, sport and the media gathered at Westminster Central Hall for a landmark national briefing delivered by leading UK experts. The event opened with broadcaster Chris Packham, and experts addressed the implications of climate and nature breakdown for food security, health, national security, infrastructure and the economy, alongside practical evidence on how risks can still be reduced.

The film of the event has been released for showing to local audiences, to promote conversation about the climate crisis, explore local responses, and drive action on the part of government. Chris Packham said: "I'd encourage people everywhere to attend a screening of The People's Emergency Briefing. It creates exactly the kind of honest local conversation we now urgently need, both about what these changes mean where we live, and about what we can do together to address them."

One attendee said, 'It felt like a very constructive and helpful evening. Many new friendships were formed and good conversations took place.'

The People's Emergency Briefing is supported by organisations across conservation, education, faith and civil society, including the Church of England, WWF, the National Trust, CPRE and the Royal Meteorological Society.

Find out more at nebriefing.org or contact Sue Green: suegreen99@hotmail.co.uk

Sue Green

Iona Abbey Nature Experience with Bob Gilbert, June, Jim and Sue Green

"We came as 44 strangers and left as friends."

Sight: A full rainbow over the Abbey. Flags in the cafe area exemplifying the Iona community engaging with issues of justice and creation. Puffins landing on the cliff top like wind up toys.

Touch: A squelching seaweed carpet of myriad types and colours strewn on rock. The feel of the cold sea on my stomach and the crushed shell sand under my feet. The bog, rocks, grasses under our feet trying to find our way back to the Abbey.

Smell: Bread cooking. Home made food!

Sound: Corncrakes craking in the next field. Young Michigans singing in the Abbey, and in corners of the chapter room. A chant remembering indigenous peoples.

Taste: Sorrel picked from the abbey grounds. Delicious soups, gluten free cookies, cinnamon swirls.



Funny: Having volunteered for the gardening work team I am down for bathrooms. Jim asleep (he wasn't!) in back of Staffa boat. Worried he might fall overboard (He didn't).

Conversation/Thoughts remembered: An early, heavyish, political meal time chat. Hope its not like this all week (it wasn't). Michigan pastor talking about countering pernicious theology such as 'I am sinning all the time' with his young people. Fun over peeling/chopping lots of veggies with the meal prep team. Fascinating, inspiring plant sessions.

Other things that stuck... Becoming associate members of Iona: the Iona community seems to be a community of Christians trying to live out faith in an inspiring way. The Big Book (Creation), the Little Book (the Bible). Mary Oliver rule of life: pay attention, be amazed, talk about it. Efforts made to welcome all, attention to diets, personal pronouns. Farewells from staff and volunteers at ferry terminal. Hugs and waves.

Walking the Labyrinth A Time for Reflection



Monday 3rd August 2026 2 - 4pm
St Peter's Church, Holton



"The luminous sun"

Everyone welcome

Time to be still, read, walk, pray, reflect, with craft resources offered and refreshments provided.

Future meetings:
Monday 7th September, 5th October.

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Halesworth Branch of Cancer Research

Regrettably, we had to cancel our street collection which was due to take place in Halesworth outside Coopers and The Angel on Friday 26th June due to the incredible weather. With temperatures above 30 degrees it would have been extremely foolhardy to go ahead.

Our next predicted heatwave maybe over when you read this but with increasingly frequent spells of hot weather here are some tips from Cancer Research to stay safe in the sun:-

- **Apply SPF30+ sun cream and reapply regularly throughout the day**
- **Stay in the shade where you can**
- **Stay hydrated, drink water little and often don't wait until you're thirsty**
- **Stay out of the sun in the hottest part of the day, 11am-3pm**
- **Wear loose clothing made from breathable fabric like cotton or linen**
- **Wear a hat and sunglasses when outdoors.**

Now some good news. We did go ahead with our collection on Saturday 27th June in the Co-op as it was lovely and cool in the store. Thank you to everyone who popped some money into our collecting goblets raising £188.77.

We have to say thank you to everyone on the committee at Holton Village Hall for inviting us to have a stall at their Classic Car Day on 21st June. It was a fantastic day, with beautiful weather, lots of classic cars, lovely food and lots of happy people and a very successful day. We raised £170 on our Cancer Research Stall which was brilliant.

At the time of writing we are half way through our week in The I-Chameleon pop up shop in The Thoroughfare from 2nd-8th July. We have had a very successful plant day on Friday with Jane Bastow from The Laburnums and another very successful cake day on Saturday, thank you Gill and Paula. More on this in the next edition of The Church Magazine.

Our next big event will be The Maize Maze by Torchlight on August 21st at The Old Hall Café, Southwold, 6.30pm - 9.30 pm. Tickets can be pre-booked via their website nearer the time, please keep looking for when the tickets go live or they can be purchased in person at The Old Hall Cafe. We will have some traditional fete games. The ever popular Welly Wanging, Marbles in a Flower pot, Quoits etc and a few stalls. We are sorry for any inconvenience but our games and stalls will be cash only.

Thank you everyone for continuing to support our fund raising events and helping Cancer Research UK in their truly amazing groundbreaking work in their fight to beat cancer.

Dawn Davis 01986 873640

Vocations Series

Vocation is the word we use to refer to God's call upon our lives. God calls all people to believe in his name, to be baptised, to live out their lives as disciples of Jesus, and be part of the Church he instituted upon earth.

In addition to this, God calls individual people to particular vocations. For example: to be married is a vocation, and to be parent or a grandparent is a vocation. These are specific ways of living out a Christian life to which selected people are invited.

The word 'vocation' is most often used when we want to talk of the ways in which God calls people to serve within his Church. In this series of short articles, I want to tell you about a few of the possible vocations and how people may live them out.

But before we talk about specific vocations, it's worth saying that Christian vocations are a lot like trying to build a bridge from both sides of a river at once. It might not matter all that much where they meet in the middle, but they certainly will need to meet if the bridge is to do its job. One side of the river is the individual person's sense of calling; the other side is the community's sense that a person is called. Both need to be present for us to say that there really is a genuine calling from God. For this reason, vocations can be quite a slow process. There needs to be time for either a community to say to someone, "Have you ever thought about being a Lay Reader?" and the person to go away and think about it, or for someone to say to the Church, "I think I might be called to be a priest" and the community to spend time deciding whether they also recognise that calling within the candidate. In many cases the wider Church – the Diocese or even the national Church – will want to have some level of involvement. So if you feel that you are called to something then you can have a first conversation with any priest you choose; but before long it will be necessary to talk to the Rector, who has a particular duty to connect individual parishes with the wider life of the Diocesan and national Church.

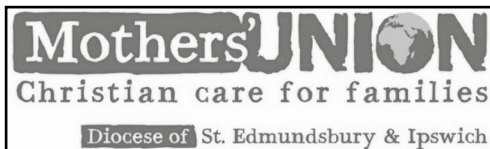
We will be exploring some more specific vocations throughout the rest of this series of articles. If you already feel you are being called to something – even if you don't quite know what – talk to a priest you trust, who will be able to give you some informal advice on what you might be searching for.

Rev'd Edmund Smith



Edmund after his first Holy Communion.

The cake reads:
"Congratulations
Edmund on your
ordination"
27.06.2026



150th Anniversary service and Annual Gathering

Our diocese was well represented at both St Paul's and the Annual Gathering the following day. Everyone came back with memories of the service led by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Worldwide president, Kathleen Snow, who inspired us at the meeting and spoke of how all over the world Mothers' Union is praying and working to improve lives for all.

23rd June Mothers' Union Big Knicker Night at the Salvation Army Centre Stowmarket.

Thank you to all the branches and groups that have supported this event. Posters had gone up all round Stowmarket. One shop assistant spoke of how she had been a resident at the Lighthouse refuge in Ipswich and would be coming along.

There have been several parish events involving knickers over the past few weeks. St Andrew's Rushmere, Colneys Branch and St John's Felixstowe all collected Knickers. Stratford St Mary, which is in the process of setting up a branch, collected 25 packs with 141 knickers. Hadleigh MU had a collection after the café church service with a big sign for the knicker collection point.

On the night there were donations of just over 600 pairs of knickers. People came from as far afield as Beccles. One lady took all the information about joining MU. One pack of knickers had been sent by post to the centre; the person had obviously heard about the event but could not come in person. One lady said that she spotted the event in the Diocesan weekly news. She said had it not been for the catchy title she would never have thought of coming.

Pillar box topper in St Andrew's Rushmere

This Pillar box topper was made at the St Andrew's Rushmere MU knit and natter group. It is on the post box on Rushmere Road (the town side of the bypass). A busy road so we hope lots of people will see it!

Colneis Rd in Felixstowe now has the topper that was in Brantham. If you have a round pillar box in your village please let Jeanette know so that we can move a MU knitted Topper to your parish in the coming months.

Diocesan 150th anniversary Mary Sumner Day service

Sunday, August 9th, 3.30pm, at St Edmunds Cathedral, Angel Hill, Bury St Edmunds. The service will be led by Rev Catherine Forsdike and the preacher is Canon Alan Forsdike. The European Cathedral Choir will be singing at this service and the cathedral bells will peal as we celebrate 150 years of Mothers' Union. The Lord Lieutenant has been invited, along with incumbents of all our MU branches and MU groups, plus the various diocesan teams we partner with in our outreach programmes. A celebration cake and MU tea will be served after the service. This service will be live streamed but we hope to have many MU members in the congregation at this very special service.

£150 challenges continue

The East Bergholt Village fair MU cake stall raised £100. One young woman asked how she could join MU and left with a welcome pack. Yoxmere Branch are wrapping up 150 books to sell as a Blind Date with a Book. They spent their seed money on string and wrapping paper. Clare Thomas is running 150 miles during 2026. She has a JustGiving page for those wishing to support and encourage her at: www.justgiving.com/page/clare-thomas-150miles

Prayer points

- We pray for our link dioceses, Lake Malawi in Malawi, Lucknow in Northern India, Byumba in Rwanda, Jalingo in Nigeria and Kagera, Luwero and Biharamulo in Tanzania.
- In Kagera we pray for their recent MU projects: To update their meeting hall. To train 6 girls in sewing skills; and plant 1000 trees for environmental conservation.
- We pray for the Credit and Savings project that supports graduates of the literacy and finance programme to set up new businesses.



Local Mothers' Union Meetings

Wenhaston Mothers' Union

Wednesday 12th August

Outing for Afternoon Tea

Further details from Margaret Goldstone 01502 478378

Yoxmere Benefice Mothers' Union

Thursday 20th August 2.30pm

Garden Meeting - Afternoon Tea

Further details from Sue Norrington 07913 488670

Mothers Union Craft, Coffee and Chat Group

Tuesday 18th August 10am-12 noon

and Tuesday 15th September 10am-12noon

Further details from Sue Norrington 07913 488670.

News from Pauline Milsted, BV Churches' Children, Family and Youth Minister

July has been a full and lively month as we draw another academic year to a close and look ahead to the busy rhythm of the summer holidays. It has been a season of celebration, preparation, and gratitude.

Pauline has had the pleasure of attending several end-of-year events in our local schools. Bramfield Primary welcomed her to their concerts and celebrations, and Edgar Sewter Primary invited her to join in the fun of EdgarFest. These moments of connection with pupils, staff, and families continue to be a blessing and a reminder of how deeply rooted our ministry is within the life of our community.

With the school term ending, much of our regular work now pauses until September. Behind the scenes, however, planning is already well underway. Pauline has been unusually organised, working closely with schools to map out the whole of next year's programme—ensuring we step into September with clarity, purpose, and excitement.

As we move into the summer holidays, our Youth Space will continue to offer spaces of friendship, creativity, and exploration. Every Thursday we will host a family picnic, providing a simple and welcoming opportunity for all ages to gather. We also have a youth poetry day planned, an Into the Wild experience at Thorington Church, and an evening of bat-spotting at Heveningham—something a little different and sure to delight.

Alongside these activities, we are entering a period of listening. Together with the Diocese, we are taking intentional time to listen to God and to one another, with a particular focus on the future of our Children, Family & Youth Ministry. This season of reflection will help shape our direction as we prepare for the next phase of ministry and apply for further rounds of funding.

Thank you for your continued prayers, encouragement, and support. As ever, this work is shared work, and we step into the summer grateful for all that has been and hopeful for all that is yet to come.

Bake Off at St Mary's Church Halesworth by Gracie

My name is Gracie. I am 13 years old and I had the idea to do a bake off at Halesworth church on the 20th June. I was really happy with my idea and I was really happy to see you all there. We had many people come to my idea. I loved all your cakes - they looked amazing and tasted really good as well. I am really happy I went along with my idea. I honestly did not think it was going to be as good as it was, so thank you to everyone who made it the funniest and happiest event. I'm now about to tell you about the cakes we had at this event (in photo on the back page from left to right). We had Dan Easter whose cake was very moist and I love the decorations. I give your cake a 7/10. Well done, thank you for coming. This cake won the best decorated! Then we had Jason Busby who did a carrot cake. It was incredible, it was a lovely cake and it looked amazing. Thank you for coming to the event. Your cake was 9/10, well done. Then we had Keith Salmon who did a Victoria sponge with jam and cream. It was amazing. One of my favourites - the cream was smooth and it added a little more to the flavour and looks.

Thank you, it was really nice to have a classic cake. Well done for coming 2nd, well done. Then we had Emilia Busby who did one for the under 18s. Well done for coming. Emilia did a chocolate cake; it was one of my favourites. For the under-18s, many congratulations on coming 1st. A lot of people said your cake was their favourite; you should be proud of yourself. And our final cake was the Hockey Pokey Coffee Cake by Veronica Mowett, which was full of flavour and came 1st. Well done and thank you for coming.

Be Still and Listen: A Moment of Prayerful Discernment in Our Growing Ministry

June's Children, Family and Youth Ministry prayer gathering took on a beautifully reflective tone as we joined the wider diocesan call to Together We Are Listening. Across Suffolk, churches are entering a season of prayerful attentiveness—seeking God's guidance with open hearts and quiet spirits. Our own ministry stepped into that rhythm with warmth, hope, and a deep sense of shared purpose.

We centred our time around the well-loved words from Psalm 46:10: "Be still and know that I am God." It's a verse many of us have heard countless times, yet when we paused to dwell in it—reading different translations, sitting with each phrase—new insights began to surface.

One version encouraged us to "step out of the traffic," a striking reminder of how easily life's busyness sweeps us along. For a ministry that is growing quickly and joyfully, this image resonated. We recognised the importance of stepping back, even briefly, to listen without rushing, without planning, without filling the silence. Stillness is simple in theory, but as many of us admitted, it can be surprisingly hard in practice.

Another theme that emerged was openness—being ready to hear God's direction as we prepare our next round of funding applications and continue shaping the future of this ministry. Listening is not passive; it is an act of trust, a willingness to be guided rather than to forge ahead under our own steam.

For Pauline, our Children, Family and Youth Minister, this verse has been a gentle companion since her retreat in May. It has surfaced repeatedly—in prayer, in music, and even through the spontaneous singing of children at Bramfield School, who took to a worship song based on the verse with unexpected delight. Their voices, normally quiet on entry, filled the space with joy as they sang the words unprompted. It was a small moment, but a powerful one: a reminder that God often speaks through the simplest, most surprising places.

As we continue this diocesan journey of listening, we do so with gratitude. Gratitude for a ministry that is flourishing. Gratitude for the children and families who bring such life to our churches. And gratitude for the quiet moments where God's voice becomes just a little clearer. If you'd like to explore more about Together We Are Listening, you can visit the diocesan website and discover how churches across Suffolk are joining in this shared season of discernment: <https://www.cofesuffolk.org/exploring-faith/our-bishops/together-we-are-listening/>

More News from Pauline Milsted

Join Us in Caring for Creation: Eco Church Events Across Blyth Valley

Many of the Blyth Valley Churches are continuing their journey through the A Rocha Eco Church programme — a national initiative helping churches become more environmentally aware in worship, land management, community engagement, and everyday lifestyle. Achieving our Bronze and Silver Award is not simply a box-ticking exercise; it's a shared commitment to caring for God's creation together.

This summer offers several opportunities for all ages to take part. You don't need specialist knowledge or equipment — just curiosity, a love of the outdoors, and perhaps a pair of comfortable shoes.

Into the Wild – Thorington Church 4th August, 1–4pm. An afternoon exploring the natural world around Thorington Church. Expect family-friendly activities, nature trails, and opportunities to learn more about the plants and creatures that make their home in our churchyards. It's relaxed, informal, and perfect for anyone who enjoys being outdoors.

Bat Evening – Heveningham Church 26th August, 8–10 pm. A magical evening event as we watch bats emerge at dusk and learn more about these remarkable creatures. Bat evenings have been some of our most popular activities in past years, and you can find photos and stories from last summer on our Facebook page: Blyth Valley Churches.

These gatherings are not only enjoyable; they also help us meet the Land and Nature section of the Eco Church survey, which encourages churches to manage their grounds in ways that support biodiversity. Every person who joins in — whether for ten minutes or an entire event — plays a part in helping our churches become places where wildlife can flourish. We warmly invite you to come along, bring a friend, and be part of this growing movement across our benefice. Caring for creation is something we can all share in, and your presence makes a real difference. If you'd like more information about the Eco Church vision and the survey that guides our progress, A Rocha's resources are available at: ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/resources

Beavers Bring Energy and Enthusiasm to St Mary's Eco Church Work

The joyful sound of children's laughter filled St Mary's Church, Halesworth on 1st July, as the local Beaver group joined us for a lively hour of hands-on environmental activities. Their visit formed part of our ongoing work towards achieving the A Rocha Eco Church Silver Award, a national scheme that encourages churches to care for creation across five key areas: Worship and Teaching, Buildings, Land, Community Engagement, and Lifestyle.

In just sixty minutes, the Beavers accomplished an impressive amount. They made bird feeders to support local wildlife, planted and watered young plants, swept and raked leaves, sowed seeds, explored the church grounds on bug hunts, and completed a diligent litter pick. Their enthusiasm was infectious, and their willingness to get stuck in brought a wonderful sense of vitality to our churchyard.

These activities directly support the Eco Church survey, which helps churches assess how well they are caring for God's earth and identify practical steps for improvement. Much of what the Beavers tackled contributes to the Land and Nature section of the survey, which encourages churches to manage their outdoor spaces in ways that promote biodiversity and sustainability.

For those interested in learning more about the Eco Church vision, A Rocha provides clear, accessible resources explaining the survey and the wider movement to help churches become "good news for God's earth." You can explore these materials at: ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/resources.

The Beavers' visit was a reminder that caring for creation is a shared responsibility across generations. Their energy helped move us one step closer to our Silver Award, and we are deeply grateful for their contribution.

Eco Warriors Round-Up – July 2026

There's something wonderfully uplifting about watching children discover the natural world, and our July Eco Warriors session was brimming with that special kind of magic. As the summer sun warmed the churchyard, the children from Sparkles Nursery and Reception joined us for our final gathering of the school year—and what a cheerful, nature-filled adventure it turned out to be.

The sessions began with an enthusiastic bug hunt, and the little ones wasted no time in getting stuck in. With sleeves rolled up and eyes sparkling, they searched high and low, uncovering all sorts of tiny treasures. Grasshoppers leapt like miniature acrobats, ladybirds showed off their bright red coats, ants marched purposefully along their invisible highways, and woodlice curled up shyly in their armour-like shells. Every discovery was met with delighted chatter and proud pointing.

From bugs to blooms, we wandered through the churchyard identifying the wildflowers that make this place such a haven for wildlife. The children helped spot scabiosa, lady bedstraw, harebells, foxgloves, pignuts, cat's ears, and cheerful poppies nodding in the breeze. We paused often to look closely at their petals and shapes, chatting about how these wildflowers play a vital role as pollinators—quietly supporting the bees, butterflies, and other insects that keep our ecosystem thriving.

Speaking of butterflies, we were treated to a fluttering parade. Peacocks with their jewel-toned wings, gentle meadow browns, and bright cabbage whites danced around us as if joining in the children's excitement. Their presence added a lovely sense of calm and beauty to the day.

As we wrapped up, there was a sweet mix of pride and anticipation. This was our final Eco Warriors session for the school year, and we're already looking forward to welcoming Sparkles Nursery and Reception back in September 2026. Their curiosity, laughter, and eagerness to learn bring such joy to our church community—and remind us all, whatever our age, of the simple wonders waiting just outside our door. Here's to more exploring, more learning, and many more tiny creatures yet to be discovered.

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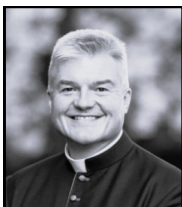
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Community Choir Coach—vacant—please contact Annie Groves if you're interested.

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Spexhall	Keith Noakes	07939 527340
Thorington	Mike Gower	01502 478078
Walpole	Ken Allen Lee Hill	07710 779146 07713 450078
Wenhaston	Jonathan Alder	01502 478855
Wissett	Geoffrey Kiddy	07881 501858

ECUMENICAL CLERGY

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27 Meadow Gardens, Beccles NR34 9PA.

Tel: 07921 540170.

Email: martin.keenan@methodist.org.uk

URC Minister Vacant

Halesworth & Bramfield URC,
Quay Street, Halesworth IP19 8EP

Father Christopher Smith, Roman Catholic Priest

St Edmund King & Martyr Roman Catholic Church,
Halesworth IP19 8SY. **Tel: 01502 723207**

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Web Address Change

You can now find information about your local Church services and events online here (the old website is defunct):

www.achurchnearyou.com

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Café Church Tuesdays!



We are currently unable to offer Café Church but there are plans to relaunch it. Watch this space!

News from Town & Villages

Blyford

Correspondent Martin Clarke
clarkehk@yahoo.com

Congratulations are due to the Rev Dr Edmund Smith on his ordination as a priest. Edmund has won a place in all our hearts in his short tenure as curate and we are glad he will be staying on as such for the foreseeable future. Our **Wild Church Service** in June was held on mid-summer's day and led by Edmund himself. It was his last service before being ordained and we were able to give him an honourable send off with what is called a 'crescenting' ceremony whereby all 24 people present formed a crescent around him and in turn read out individual words such as honour, love or happiness which were then repeated by the whole assembly. And after a chorus of 'For he's a jolly good fellow' Edmund expressed his gratitude and pleasure and we all gathered round to eat chocolate brownies (Edmund's favourite) and have a good old natter.

Edmund continues to carry out duties as curate and he is an excellent host to the monthly lunchtime concerts in St Mary's which last month featured a wind quintet called Qwind-Essential who played 'Parade of the Tin Soldiers' by German composer Leon Jessel. This is familiar to me - and I'm sure many of the audience (but not the quintet it seemed) as the musical introduction to Toytown on BBC Radio's Children's Hour featuring Larry the Lamb. I was slightly saddened to learn from the horn player's introduction that the piece referenced the legend regarding Tsar Paul I who had left his parade grounds without issuing a "halt" order to the ever-obedient marching soldiers who had marched all the way to Siberia before being remembered and ordered to march back.

The warm summer weather has allowed me to venture out on my trusty motorcycle and get into practice for the **2026 Ride and Stride event on Saturday 12 September**. This is now a national event with nearly every county in England taking part. It is the main

fundraiser for the Historic Churches Trust upon which many of us depend for grants towards infrastructural work. It started in Kessingland in 1981 when the village Bobby at the time decided to do a sponsored bike ride to raise money for his local church. At Blyford not only will we be registering the walkers and cyclists as they drop by, but we will be running our Stall on the Green with plants and bric a brac etc.

And some advance news of a unique event happening in Blyford Church on 17th October. We will be hosting a special **St Ethelreda Day** to commemorate the life of the East Anglian Princess and Abbess of Ely. Full details in next month's edition of the Blyth Valley Times. Order your copy now.

Bramfield

Correspondent Alfred Mullett
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June Family Service Pauline presented the monthly Family Service with the theme of Feeding The 5000. We had a wonderful mix of families from all ages. While the service format is aimed at younger families, it is a wonderful, enlightening service for all of us young and old. The homily was both accessible and very thought provoking, reminding us that we need to not put our limits on what Jesus can do for us.

Morning Prayers For those who can make it, the Thursday Morning Prayers services are both simple and reflective, and never fail to leave us with a place of peace to pin our lives to. Generally, it is presented by either Rev Linda or Edmund, both leaving us with historical insight and something to make our lives go forward with peace. We welcome anyone who has time at 9:30am on Thursday to join us at Bramfield, St Andrews.

Evensong This month's main service was an evensong presented by Dominic. The music was wonderful, and the somewhat more traditional service welcomed both the young and

old. The message was thought provoking and applicable to those of all ages present.

Summer Equinox Ecotherapy East had their Summer Equinox celebration in Foxtail Meadow. It began with a quiet celebration of Midsummer, then a reflective walk through the Labyrinth. We continued with an afternoon of tending the land and taking care of the new trees in the meadow, and wrapped up the evening with a gathering around the fire with all our friends new and old, shared food, music and stories. As the correspondent, I have found these days to be a wonderful addition to the time spend at church and in our community. Jesus made it clear that nature was his second (perhaps should be the first) book, and spending a day with friends, tending, and helping save some of that nature drew me closer to my faith.

Village Fete Saturday 1st August 12-4

Looking ahead to the summertime, we plan to have the Village Fete again on the Village Green, next to the school. This will be on 1st August 12-4 and we hope to have the same kind of set up as previous years, with the Black Deek Band confirmed to come already, as well as Morris Dancers. If anyone is able to help or wishes to have a stall, then do get in touch. You will have to provide your own table and awning (if needed) and so contact either Jinnie on 07780833450 or Jane on 01986 784393.

Morning Prayer at Bramfield St Andrews

– **Every Thursday at 9:30am** If you have the time and are looking for a half an hour of quiet and meditation for your week, please join us for morning prayer every Thursday. The service is taken by either Reverend Linda or Reverend Edmund, or sometimes one of our wardens, as the week settles out. It is a quiet time with God, and with our friends.

Halesworth Food Bank Collection Box

We have a collection box in the church porch for donations for the Halesworth Food Bank. Any donations of tinned and non-perishable items are gratefully received. Thank you for your support of this vital community organisation.

Holy Communion – Sunday 9th August 10am We invite all who wish to join us and there will be tea, coffee, and conversation following.

Family Church at Bramfield St Andrews. Sunday 23rd August 10am Family Church will be presented by Pauline. The theme for this month is Crossing the Red Sea. It is a shorter, simpler service, with things for everyone from all ages, from the littles to the Elders. All are welcome. There will be tea and coffee following.

19th September – Ecotherapy East Community day Ecotherapy East warmly invite you to join them on their Community Day, Saturday 19th September, starting at 10am, celebrating the Autumn Equinox. Everyone is welcome of any (or no) faith. We will be celebrating the life on the meadow with a simple collective gathering starting at 10am and then followed by land-tending at 11.30am. You can come to any part of the day and stay as long as you wish. Please bring a packed lunch and drink (although some hot drinks are available). We would love to meet some new people who live in the area. Any questions, or just to make contact, please email: ecotherapyeast.info@gmail.com

Fundraising for Bells and Roof We are beginning the process of fundraising for repairs to our beautiful church. Firstly restoring the bells so they can sing across our valley again and secondly, recovering the thatch on the roof of the main church. These are going to be large projects and please, do get in touch if you would like to help with any donations for these projects, or want to help with the fund raising with ideas or assistance, which we need as much as the funds. We would gratefully appreciate any help!

PCC Membership We are always very interested if anyone wishes to come on board with our PCC helping us to run and manage our beautiful church. We have meetings every two months and so if anyone wishes to help assist us in any way, we would be very grateful. So do contact Jinnie on 07780833450. Thank you.

Home Service of Communion If anyone locally would like to have a Service of Communion at their own home, then

do get in touch with Reverend Edmund as he is happy to come to you. His details are 07787615716.

Prayer Noticeboard and Assistance As always, we are always here for you, so if you know of anyone who needs a hand with anything or help in any way, please do get in touch as we are always happy to help. Tel Jinnie on 01986 784254. We have a Prayer Noticeboard in the church now, so if you need us to pray for you, we will be happy to do this at our regular Thursday service. Thank you!

Chediston

Correspondent Veronica Downing

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July has felt like August this year and I think that both we and the world about us have seasonal disorientation. By the time you read this, I think much of the harvest will have been gathered in, well before the season of Harvest Festivals. The team rota for the next quarter sees Chediston's festival slot on Sunday 11th October. I feel that this year's harvest services will be more reflective rather than in thanksgiving – certainly by October. No bad thing. We will be praying for the farming community, agricultural industry, the food industry and individuals who have been adversely affected by this exceptionally hot and dry summer. Our focus will also be on how we can learn from this summer's weather and increase our personal effort into caring for our patch of God's creation, whether it is a farm or window box.

Church-wise in Chediston we have welcomed new people to our congregation, Terri and Guy, who have moved into the village and we will have had our Summer PCC meeting on 21st July in the vestry. The service on 12th July was taken by Revd Linda Berry and I preached my third sermon as part of the course Introduction to Preaching run by the Diocese. St Peter and the power of prayer were the focus. I have now completed this course, received my certificate of attendance and await, with the other 30 participants, for Bishop Joanne's authorisation to preach (up to 6 sermons a year).

I have applied to do my Reader Training, which is a two year course, and on 18th July I will be in front of the panel discerning my suitability. Thanks to everyone who has supported this move in my ministry development. Whatever the outcome, I will continue my role as a Church Elder, and being part of the team and congregation enabling worship at St Mary's Chediston to continue.

On 12th August as part of the year's **Lunchtime Recital series** at St Mary's Halesworth, Wendy Slaney (mezzo-soprano), myself (soprano) and Jonathan Rutherford (a very accomplished pianist) will be performing a programme of songs, arias and duets, which Wendy has boldly themed Heroes and Heroines. Refreshments, sandwiches and cakes are available in the church from 12 noon and the recital of about 45 minutes starts at 12.30. There is a retiring collection in aid of St Mary's Halesworth.

A big thank you to the Herne Hill gang who have spent quite a few hours this month cleaning the church. Thank you too to our village bellringers who not only come to the Wednesday evening practice, but ring on Sundays before our services. St Mary's Chediston is alive and well as a place of worship and community resource. If you would like to support us, we would love to hear from you. Have a think, and we look forward to seeing lots of the village at the community Summer Fete on Saturday 29th August. 2.00 to 4.00pm.

Annual Bike Ride

A reminder that this is due to take place on Saturday 12th September. I have all the necessary information here plus sponsorship forms. Please sponsor a cyclist if you are able to or even better take part, as half the money raised by Chediston will go to St Mary's. I shall also be leaving forms in the church nearer the time. As usual I shall be wanting persons to sit in the church to sign forms and offer refreshments. Please phone me if you are able to help – thank you,

Sally Aldous 01986 873363

Cookley

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See website 'A Church Near You' Cookley, for updates.

Halesworth

Correspondent Jason Busby

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The highlight of the past month must surely have been sharing in the Revd Dr **Edmund Smith's first celebration of the Holy Eucharist** following his ordination to the priesthood. On Sunday 28th June, the Feast of St Peter and St Paul, St Mary's was filled with joy as we gathered for a Solemn Eucharist. The bells rang out across the town, beautiful music filled the church, our visiting singers enhanced the liturgy, and Edmund celebrated the Eucharist with the reverence, warmth and thoughtful style that is already becoming so familiar to us. In his first sermon following his ordination, Edmund reflected on the life of St Peter. He reminded us that Peter was far from perfect – a man in whom holiness and foolishness were often intertwined. Yet this same Peter became the rock upon which Christ built his Church.

Edmund spoke of Peter's ministry: overseeing the appointment of the first deacons, sharing the gift of the Holy Spirit with the Samaritans, welcoming the first Gentile converts into the Church, and enduring persecution for the sake of Christ. His message was one that resonated deeply: "God calls all manner of people into his vineyard. He calls those who appear saintly and those who do not. He calls the young and the old. The one thing we all have in common is that, like Peter, we are a mixture of doubt and faith, weakness and virtue, and yet we are still called, anointed and welcomed before God's throne". It was a privilege to worship alongside Edmund on such a significant day in his ministry. We are truly blessed to have Edmund serving the churches of the Blyth Valley, and we look forward to watching his priestly ministry flourish in the years ahead.

A Prayer for Edmund

Heavenly Father, we thank you for calling Edmund to serve as a priest in your Church. Fill him daily with the gifts of your Holy Spirit; grant him wisdom in preaching, compassion in pastoral care, faithfulness in prayer and joy in celebrating the sacraments.

Bless him with your love and peace, strengthen him in their ministry among us, and may he always know the guidance and presence of Christ. Amen.

As we look ahead, we have a wonderful programme of events taking place at St Mary's over the coming months, and everyone is warmly invited. Our ever-popular Lunchtime Recital Series continues on Wednesday 12th August at 12.30pm with **Heroes and Heroines**, a delightful programme of songs, operatic arias and duets performed by Veronica Downing (Soprano) and Wendy Slaney (Mezzo-Soprano), accompanied by Jonathan Rutherford. Admission is free, refreshments are available from midday, and there will be a retiring collection.

On Sunday 6th September at 3.00pm, we welcome **Chanter's Jigge with A Tudor Portrait**. Combining music, storytelling and humour, this entertaining performance brings the world of Tudor England vividly to life. Tickets are £10 on the door.

The following weekend, on Saturday 12th September, St Mary's will once again take part in **Heritage Open Day**. This year's theme celebrates 200 years of the Halesworth Town Clock.

Finally, on Saturday 3rd October at 7.15pm, we present something rather special: a screening of the classic silent film **The Phantom of the Opera** (1925) with a live improvised pipe organ accompaniment by renowned local organist Tom Horton. Experiencing silent cinema with live organ music is exactly as audiences would have enjoyed it a century ago, making for a truly unforgettable evening. Tickets are £10 on the door.

Whether you are a regular member of our congregation or simply curious to discover more about St Mary's, there is something for everyone. We look forward to welcoming you through our doors over the coming weeks.

Halesworth WI Report We set off on a fine June morning for our annual outing, and fortunately the weather was neither too hot or too cold and not raining. We travelled on the two Hoppa buses driven by John and Colin to Horning, arriving in time for coffee and an early lunch before boarding a large boat for a trip down the river. The driver of the boat gave a running

commentary of the riverside properties we passed, some more palatial than others, and pointed out various birds and the wildlife on the river banks, before we returned after an hour and a half. We then headed home, stopping for a tea break on the way at a farm cafe and shop. Thanking our excellent drivers, John and Colin, for an enjoyable trip out.

Heveningham

Correspondent

Jeanette Griffin

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We were delighted this past Sunday to welcome Edmund back to St Margaret's again, but this time as a newly ordained Priest and taking our Traditional Communion. The service was very enjoyable and I always find Edmund has a lovely way with our Parishioners, even taking the time to engage with a little girl who had found a spider. In a time of dwindling services it is a welcome change to have children in the services and Edmund does make everyone feel welcome.

Pet Service This month, on the 9th August, I am eagerly awaiting our much-loved Pet Service, one of the highlights of our year! Every year I'm excited to see what wonderful animals arrive. Last year we welcomed a horse, sheep, a goat and, of course, our superstar Teddy the tortoise! Someone suggested we should have a donkey this year, so if you know anyone who has one and would like to bring it along, we'd be absolutely delighted to welcome them. We have plenty of parking for horse boxes and trailers too. Let's see if we can make this year's gathering our most memorable yet!

Fundraising & Getting Involved We have several more fundraising events planned over the coming months, with activities for both adults and families. Our 100 Club is also continuing, and we still have a few numbers available. The money raised helps us care for our churchyard, and thanks to your support, we've already been able to make a real difference. Every contribution helps us keep our beautiful church looking its best and ensures it remains a welcoming place for everyone who visits.

We're always grateful for people who would like to get involved. In particular, we're looking for someone to take on the role of Church Secretary, and we'd also love extra help with organising and running events.

One of the loveliest things to come from all of this is the wonderful sense of community that's grown around the church. It's not just about Sunday services—our events bring people together, spark conversations and create friendships.

People sometimes ask me why I put so much time into organising these events. The answer is simple. We all benefit from taking a little time out of our busy lives to share a cup of tea, have a chat and enjoy each other's company. If our church can provide that space, then every bit of effort is worthwhile.

We look forward to seeing many of you over the summer.

Holton

Correspondent Jill Hewlett

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I am writing this as St Peter's is gearing up for the **Flower Festival** which is on the weekend after the deadline for this issue of the BVT. This means that I can't report on any of it until September! No doubt we will have had our usual wonderful weekend celebrating flowers and the ingenuity of all our flower arrangers. Cake will have been eaten thanks to all our bakers and tea served thanks to the catering team. Our thanks to all who put so much into organising this event which raises so much towards the upkeep of our lovely church and the ministry that goes on within it. And we must not forget the delight in worshipping together at the **6.30pm Songs of Praise service** led by Edmund which rounds off our weekend.

Something that I have been thinking about is the ministry within the Blyth Valley Team of Churches of lay people, particularly those who take services, as without them the number of services throughout the Blyth Valley would be much reduced. Yesterday, at St Peter's, our service was led by Gary Atkins with Chris Atkins giving the address and Bill Mahood leading our prayers. I found the whole service moving and relevant.

Chris and Gary are given authority to do this as they are Lay Elders within the Team; Veronica Mowat, a Licensed Reader within the Diocese, will be leading our Iona service at the end of July, more on that in September. Throughout the Blyth Valley there are Churchwardens, Readers and Lay Elders who fill the gaps that the clergy cannot fill and for them we should be very grateful. And apart from those who take services there are others who minister in other ways. At St Peter's we have Walking the Labyrinth most months which is led by Valerie Wheeler, which I and others find very helpful.

Walking the Labyrinth 2-4pm

Monday 3rd August The theme for August is "The Luminous Sun". Join us for a time of reflection, a time to pray, a time to walk the labyrinth, a time to do something creative if you so desire.

Huntingfield

Correspondent Sally Clarke

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Firstly, I must start by sending **congratulations** to Revd Dr Edmund Smith from the entire PCC on his recent Ordination at Bury St Edmunds cathedral. We very much look forward to his first Holy Communion service here at St Mary the Virgin, Huntingfield on Sun 26th July at 10am

In August Jenny Blackmore will be leading us in '**Iona Worship**'. This is an ecumenical service inspired by early pilgrimages to Iona which is both engaging and meaningful. Do feel free to join us on Sun 23rd Aug at 10am to support Jenny, find out more about Iona worship or both. Refreshments follow all our services.

When the sun shines and the coolest place to be is in the church, our visitor numbers rise, especially during the recent heatwaves. As always, for a small donation, you can request the services of Emma to guide you through some of the **history** of the church and the creation of the beautifully painted ceiling by Mildred Holland in 1860.

We are delighted that the church has recently been used for a renewal of marriage vows and a marriage service.

We have another wedding in September of **Henry and Lizzie** members of our congregation, and our best wishes go to all of them.

On 22nd July the funeral of **Rose Steele** was held here. Rose has been a Huntingfield resident for many a long year and for many years kept the church clean and tidy for us for which we are forever grateful. Rose now lays at rest with her late husband Jack in the churchyard.

At our last Deanery Synod meeting the focus was on The Church of England's partnership with '**Farewill**' who offer a bespoke FREE online Will writing service. People using this service are under no obligation to leave a share of their estate to the church but no matter how large or small, every gift can make a difference, whether it be for mission, buildings or maintaining a grave. To find out more visit: churchofengland.org/free-wills

As I sit here writing this the Combines, tractors and trailers are thundering past so 3 dates for your diaries: **Sunday 27th September - Harvest Festival at 10am**, followed by Macmillan Coffee morning in the porch and churchyard from 11am. Donations of cake gratefully received and even more lovely to see you all there.

Saturday 3rd Oct will be our annual **Harvest Supper in the Hub**, always a delightful evening with delicious homemade food and entertainment of some sort thrown into the mix.....Everyone is truly welcome!

Linstead

Correspondent

Malcolm Heath 01986 785289

www.linstead.suffolk.gov.uk

EVERY OTHER YEAR, WE VISIT THE site of the church of St. Peter's, Linstead Magna. It is always a sobering occasion because St. Peter's was once a substantial church with a solid Tudor brick tower. Now, all that remains is very faint hump in the corner of a field. I would love to know why the monks of Sibton Abbey chose to build a church there, the site must have had a significance, but what it was has been lost, together with the church itself. Edmund led the procession to the site,

with an appropriate chant. After a brief service we processed back to Church Farm, and enjoyed a jolly good tea, courtesy of Peter and Tracey Abell. It was a glorious day so we sat out in their garden and watched a fly-past circling round Heveningham Hall.

SAYING IT WITH FLOWERS COMES quite easily to Linstead and to prove it, July saw our Flower Festival. Our little church, normally quite sober in hue, became a riot of colour and imagination. The theme was 'Nursery Rhymes' and the result was stunning. The porch was enhanced with some arrangements by the younger members, so come on in! (Photos on the back page):

THERE IS, DEEP WITHIN US ALL, AN eternal child. Whilst we might struggle with some of the words, we can still recite, sing even, a fair number of rhymes. Here, for instance, Humpty Dumpty presides over a font, transformed into a podium for 'Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary'. Old King Cole was in evidence, complete with his backing group. Naturally, Polly had put the kettle on but, when it came to having tea, a brief journey across the road was required. But sumptuous fare was on offer. The event ran for two days and was very well supported. It raised just over £950 towards our redecoration fund. Our thanks go to all who created the displays, to all who provided refreshments and to all who came and enjoyed their second childhood! The event concluded with an imaginative service of 'Floral Evensong' and we are most grateful to Edmund and Jason for choreographing that. In response to many questions, we fully intend to hold the flower festival again, next year.



BUT SUMMER IS STILL ICUMIN IN! If you enjoyed the Flower Festival, you will love this! So please do join us and support the Village Hall.

THE NEXT Linstead FILM NIGHT IS scheduled for Saturday, September 5th at 7.00 p.m. The title will be announced shortly.

Spexhall

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

Facebook: St Peter's Spexhall and Spexhall Village Hall

What a Scorch! Your Woodpecking correspondent must say how hard it has been trying to keep cool this summer. Harvests seem earlier, and the lack of rain has caused real problems for farming. Let's hope we have a slightly cooler end to the summer this month.

August Service The Bank Holiday Weekend will be a busy one in Spexhall. All are invited to Holy Communion on Sunday 30th August at 10am. We like to think we are a welcoming and inclusive church. Do come along!

The Village Party We are very pleased to have another Village Party on the Pightle (behind the church) on Monday 31st August (Bank Holiday Monday) from 3-7pm, with drinks, nibbles, strawberries and a time for a catch up. Honey will be on sale for the Church Restoration Fund (cash or card!). We look forward to seeing villagers and friends.

Spexhall Fun Dog Show Apart from Tilly winning best senior dog (obviously there will be no 'fix'!), the classes are very broad, and I am sure there will be some surprising entries. Don't forget to think of a costume for you and your pooch if you want to win 'dog like it's owner'. You and your dog having the same expression may not be enough! The fun is on Saturday 29th of August. There are lots of categories for entries, so come on time to register for a 1pm start. Hot dogs (meat and veggie) will be available, and a range of lovely cakes. Bring items for the raffle, and don't forget cash for tickets in the

hope of winning items re-gifted by others! All proceeds to the Village Hall Fund.

Looking Forward Next month we will have the harvest festival, probably on the last Sunday of the month (we could have had it early August this year!). Goodness, I will be telling you about the Carol Service soon. How time flies. Thinking of which, I am off....

Thorington

Correspondent
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Thorington PCC welcome you all to our event at the church and churchyard on August 15th, there will be our usual stall holders (art/baskets/weaving/ceramics and more) and delicious home made lunches and teas, with a wine bar too! Plenty to listen to as we have award winning Suffolk poet Steph Feeney joining us, and then the Pheonix Brass Ensemble from Framlingham. Plenty of parking and admission free, all proceeds for the upkeep of Thorington church. Come along and enjoy this special place..

There will be more news in next month's magazine so for now please see the poster on p.27 for the above event and tell your friends.

Trish Gower 01502 478078

Walpole

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See website 'A Church Near You' Walpole, for updates.

Wenhaston

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Well we cannot say we haven't had any Summer weather this year! My, hasn't it been hot? It has even been completely dry for Wimbledon, which is unusual! Let's hope we have a mellow Autumn too.

On Friday 21st August the Village Hall Committee are hosting a Big Quiz and they have invited the church to help at this event. We will receive a part of the proceeds, which is very kind of the committee. The doors open at 6.30pm and the quiz will start at 7pm. Teams of four, £10 to enter. There will be a bar and light refreshments. Please register your team with Karen on 07734 200624.

We usually attend St Mary's Halesworth on the first Sunday of the month, and alternate with the Methodist Church on the second. Holy Communion on the third and Pause for Thought, an informal service, on the fourth. Do come along and join us in our worship, in our beautiful church.

On 12 September The Suffolk Historic Churches Trust will hold their annual sponsored Ride and Stride. This brings in a substantial amount of money to be spent on the upkeep of our historic churches, and Wenhaston Church has benefitted from it this year. Wenhaston Church will be visited by quite a few cyclists and there will be a rota in the porch for stewards. If anyone would like to cycle or walk for Wenhaston Church, there will be sponsor forms in church. Let's hope for a nice warm day.

Wenhaston Walkers Our first walk in August will be on Tuesday 4th setting off at 10am from Wenhaston Village Hall. On Tuesday 18th August, Sally and Nick will lead the walk from The Huntingfield Arms, The Street, Huntingfield IP19 0PU starting out at 10am. There is limited parking at the pub and in adjacent roads but parking is permitted at The Hub opposite (cash donation requested). Lunch can be ordered on the day before starting out. If you wish to add your name to the circulation list, please email ipbigwood@btinternet.com

Wissett

Correspondent Mary Pester

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How is everyone and everything coping in this ongoing heatwave? Maybe by the time this is printed we will have

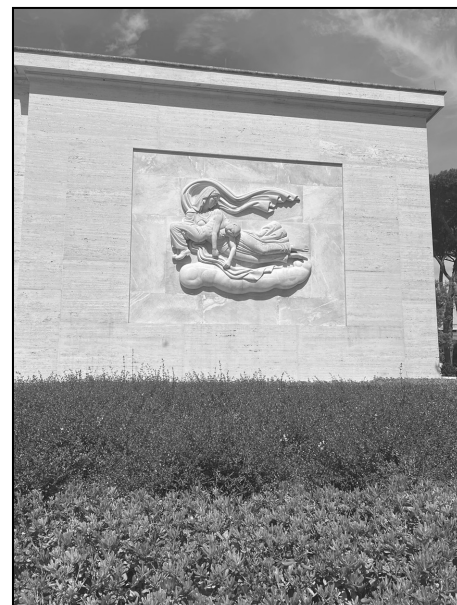
smelled that wonderful smell of rain on hot, dry ground. I hope so! These are the dog days, the days of great heat. I am filling up the dog's bowl outside the church door each day. I expect it is drunk by all sorts of birds and beasts.

In his poem, "**August**", John Clare writes, "Harvest approaches with its bustling day. The wheat tans brown and barley bleaches grey. And tawney glooms the valley thronged with beans." I don't know if the valley of Wissett has been thronged with beans? Maybe. Having heard and seen much tractor activity by day and night over the last few weeks I expect "all is safely gathered in".

Now, what of the **church services** in August here in Wissett? We have Morning Prayer on Sunday 9th at 10.00am. Edmund is taking his first service of Holy Communion at Wissett on Sunday 16th of August at 10.00am then we have Evensong on the 23rd August at 6pm. Around the church the grass may be brown, shrivelled and dead but John Keats has these comforting words,

*"The poetry of earth is not dead:
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead;
That is the Grasshopper's - he takes the lead
In summers luxury-he has never done
With his delights; for when tired out with fun
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed."*

Well, when I came into the church the other morning to turn the page of the big prayer book to the psalm of the day, I notice something out of the corner of my eye. A grasshopper on the altar rail. It must have just hopped in, maybe enticed by the flowers by the altar. We have beautiful sun flowers there at present. Why not come into the cool of the church to sit and ponder? "The poetry of the earth is never dead."



'The Resurrection' Sicily-Rome American Cemetery and Memorial. Nettuno. See p.6.

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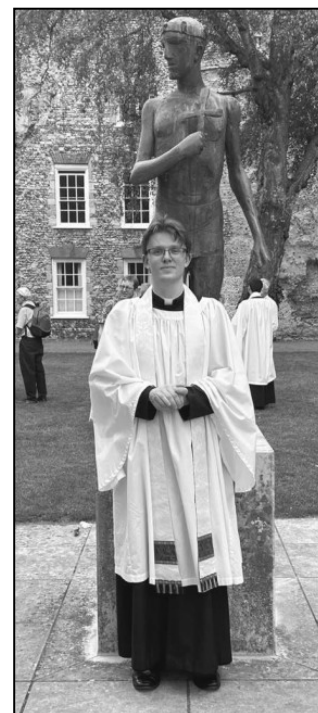
**Bramfield
Village Fête**

Saturday 1st August • 12pm-4pm

Black Deek Band
 The Pretty Grim Border Morris Dancers
 Tea • Cakes • BBQ • Hog Roast
 Children's Games • Stalls

In aid of St. Andrew's Church, Bramfield
 Village Hall & Bridge Meadow Playing Field
(Sorry No Dogs!)

Village Green, Bridge Meadows, IP19 9HZ





Green Tips for August



Green tip – August 2nd

This is a good time of year to get on your bike, so why not try it if you haven't cycled for a while. Not only will you keep fit, but you won't be burning any carbon either.

Green tip – August 9th

This might also be a good month for a litter pick – either on your own, as a family or as a community. Rubbish not only looks unsightly along our roads, but it can seriously harm wildlife. You just need a large sack, a grabber and some gloves. If you are doing a community litter pick then your local council may lend you the equipment – just phone them up and ask.

Green tip – August 16th

We are increasingly getting long dry spells, and it will take time for our reservoir levels to get back to normal. Conserving water is important, so please try not to keep the tap running unnecessarily (particularly when cleaning your teeth). If you have a glass of water you find you don't need then use it to water a houseplant. If you are on a meter this will save you money, but it will also help save the planet as well!

Green tip – August 23rd

Millions of gallons of water are wasted every year because of leaks – not only at home but also by water companies. If you see water in the road when it has been dry or bubbling out of the ground, then report a possible leak to your water company straight away.

Green tip – August 30th

The water butts in your garden may be running a bit low. If you have to use a hosepipe, remember to fit a trigger nozzle when you sue it to water your garden. Targeting water only where it's needed ensures you don't waste any where it it's not absolutely necessary.

Rev. Richard Stainer

Assistant Priest in the Cockfield Benefice

NEWBY BOOKS ON SALE

"THE CENTURY I SAW" by Donald Newby

£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 Wenhasston.
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.
Proceeds to local charities and EA Air Ambulance.

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



Swiftly this Summer ...

August already, most of the swifts will have gone by now, leaving us with emptier, quieter skies and that sense of loss and nostalgia for time passing so quickly.

It has been another active year for Halesworth Swifts, getting more nest boxes installed and more people tuned in and engaged with our blue sky heroes. As well as nest boxes going up on private houses, Durrants estate agents put up two boxes supplied by Halesworth Swifts on their front on The Thoroughfare and have shown inspiring and encouraging appreciation and care for swifts. They even made a little information video bringing together Halesworth Swifts and Durrants in a special and significant business/environment connection.

Swift Awareness Week was 27th June to 5th July and Halesworth Swifts had a window display in the library to mark this. An evening swift walk on 27th June, starting from the library, was well attended, with some 14 people joining and delighting in watching the birds, which were very visible and active over town.

Members of the swifts group led the walkers to the Saxons Way/Norwich Road roundabout to tell them about the colony that side of town, nesting at The Cut and close by. Then along Rectory Street where there are established nesting sites.



Chediston Street with its old roofs is another swift nesting favourite, and from there to the new Hopkins Homes site off Roman Way to see and hear about swift nesting bricks. These are hollow bricks flush with the wall of the house, the entrance opening barely visible and with no interference to the building at all. They are a brilliant concept for secretive swifts who love to squeeze themselves through a small hole into a hidden, dark cavity to raise their young. This development of houses has swift nest bricks thoughtfully built in, we wish every new development would follow his example ...



The swift walkers rounded off the evening with a social drink in town, and the swifts continued to fly by against darkening skies and a rainbow. May they always and for ever grace our skies.

If you feel inspired and are interested in supporting Halesworth Swifts in any way, or you know where swifts are nesting, please do get in touch via the Facebook page Halesworth Swifts or email halesworthswifts@gmail.com

Edith Summerhayes

INSPIRED BY *Creation*

Art, Photography & Craft Competition

Celebrating Creativity Across Our 14 Churches

Have you been inspired by the beauty of creation, the changing seasons, village life, faith, nature, or the countryside around us?

.....»»».....

We invite artists, photographers and crafters of all abilities to enter our *Inspired by Creation* competition.

Everyone is welcome to take part - beginners and experienced creators alike!

.....»»».....

CATEGORIES



PHOTOGRAPHY

- Under 12s
- 12-18 Years
- Adults



ART

- Under 12s
- 12-18 Years
- Adults

.....»»».....

IMPORTANT DATES



LAUNCH DATE
1st August 2026



CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES
31st May 2027



JUDGING
Date to be confirmed

For entry details & further information please email:
✉ stmargaretchurch11@gmail.com

.....»»».....

Creativity ♥ Community ♥ Inspiration



You are invited to a

Fun Dog Show

Spexhall Village Hall

IP19 0RQ

Saturday 29th August 1.00pm

plus BBQ Tea & cake Raffle

Bring your dog, have fun, win a prize

This is a fund-raiser for the village hall

///dated/headsets/grower

The Spexhall Summer Party

Monday 31st August
3-7pm
The Pightle
at Spexhall House Old Rectory
(Behind Spexhall church)

Summer Drinks
Strawberries
Savoury snacks and cakes
Local honey for sale

In aid of
the Spexhall Church Restoration Fund

If it rains, we'll be in the village hall

SILENT FILM SHOW

The PHANTOM of The OPERA

1925 SILENT FILM
STARRING
LON CHANEY

PG

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**PIPE ORGAN
SOUNDTRACK**
BY
TOM HORTON

SATURDAY OCTOBER 3RD, 2026
AT 7:15PM
ST MARY'S CHURCH
HALESWORTH, SUFFOLK, IP19 8LL
TICKETS £10 ON THE DOOR

Halesworth Church Concert Review

This month, St Marys Halesworth was delighted to welcome Qwindessential – a wind ensemble making their debut at St Marys. Qwindessential very modestly claim that they are an informal group of musical friends rather than a professional musical outfit. However, shortly after claiming this they proceeded to perform no fewer than fifteen pieces, ranging from Elgar to the theme from Brideshead Revisited. As any wind player will tell you, fifteen pieces is close to being marathon-length. After nine or ten pieces, many musicians will find that their lip muscles are starting to tire. To make it to fifteen suggests a pack of seasoned musicians – which is, of course, exactly what Qwindessential really are.

On this occasion we were treated to an ensemble of five instruments: bassoon, flute, clarinet, oboe, and French horn. Each distinguished themselves in their own way during the concert. The bassoon part was a steady and often unobtrusive foundation of the ensemble but came to the fore during March of the Tin Soldiers, where it provided an edge of aggression in an otherwise upbeat and jovial marching-tune. The oboe had moments in the spotlight throughout the concert but was especially beautiful during the performance of some Elgar, during which it showcased the theme of the piece – heavily ornamented with trills – before passing the melody to the clarinet and taking it back again. The clarinet part often blended with the flute and oboe, filling out a rich harmony rather than leaping to the fore – but there were plenty of exceptions, include a particularly sonorous moment during the theme from Brideshead Revisited. The same could be said of the flute, except that the flute had a particular moment of glory in carrying the main motif in Grieg's Hall of the Mountain King. Finally, the horn soared over the top of the ensemble like a vocal line, being particularly prominent in both Psalm 23 and Galloping Home.

Whilst we were thoroughly impressed with each individual musician, what makes Qwindessential special is the degree to which they have gelled together as a team. Their obvious friendship shines through in their music, and it was a joy to welcome them to St Marys. We very much hope they will return in future concerts, and perhaps also at other events over the coming years.

Edmund

Concerts at Cratfield 2026

Chamber Music in East Suffolk

www.concertsatcratfield.org



Sunday 5 July 3pm
THE DIONYSUS ENSEMBLE

Sunday 19 July 3pm
DANNY DRIVER piano

Sunday 2 August 3pm
CATHERINA LEE violin
JONATHAN FERRUCCI piano

Sunday 16 August 3pm
ENGEGÅRD QUARTET

Sunday 30 August 3pm
NICHOLAS DANIEL oboe
HUW WATKINS piano

Sunday 13 September 3pm
BUSCH TRIO

Some Future Church Event Dates for the Diary...

Blyford

12th September: Heritage Open Day 11am - 4pm. Stall on the green. Ride & Stride.

17th October: St Etheldreda Day 11am - 3pm.

17th - 18th October. Water of life all day. Bulb planting (17th October only).

7th November: Wild Party (Open Mic) 2pm - 4pm

6th December: Angel Day (Make an Angel) 10.00am - 1pm

Heveningham

9th October: Quiz Night.

11th October: Harvest Festival.

Linstead

12th September: 9am to 5pm Ride and Stride.

28th November: 10m to 1pm, Linstead Christmas Market at St. Mary's Church, Halesworth.

See throughout the Blyth Valley Times for other events and activities. Please update Annie with your future plans!

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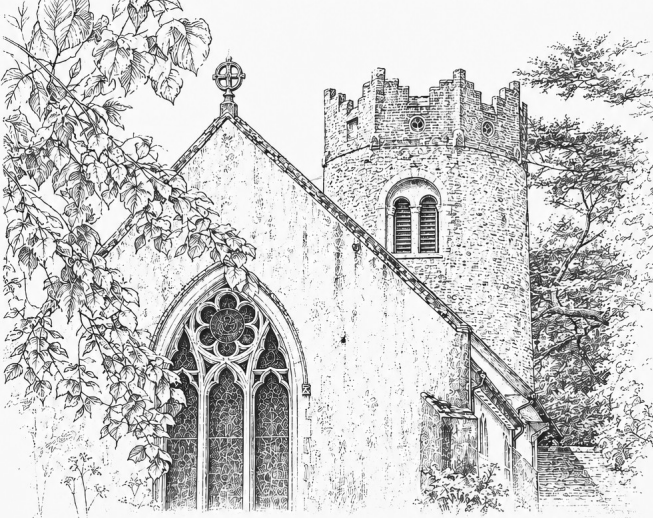
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WHAT'S ON



ST PETER'S CHURCH
THORINGTON

SUMMER OPEN AFTERNOON

SATURDAY 15TH AUGUST
12.30PM ONWARDS

1PM
POETRY READINGS
WITH LOCAL POET
Steph Ellen Feeney

Born in Louisiana and raised in Texas, Steph Ellen Feeney now lives and writes in Suffolk. Her poems have been widely published, most recently in *The Poetry Review* and *kerlin lit*, and have also been commended in Suffolk's own Crabbe Poetry Competition. Steph will be reading from her debut poetry collection, *Small Changes*, published by Broken Sleep Books.

2PM
SUFFOLK PHOENIX
BRASS BAND
WITH LAWRENCE KILLIAN

We're delighted to welcome the Suffolk Phoenix Brass Band, a friendly community brass band with a history stretching back to 1971, when it evolved from the former Suffolk Fire Service Band. Their programme includes Big Band favourites, popular TV themes and classical music, promising an afternoon of musical enjoyment in the beautiful surroundings of St Peter's Church.



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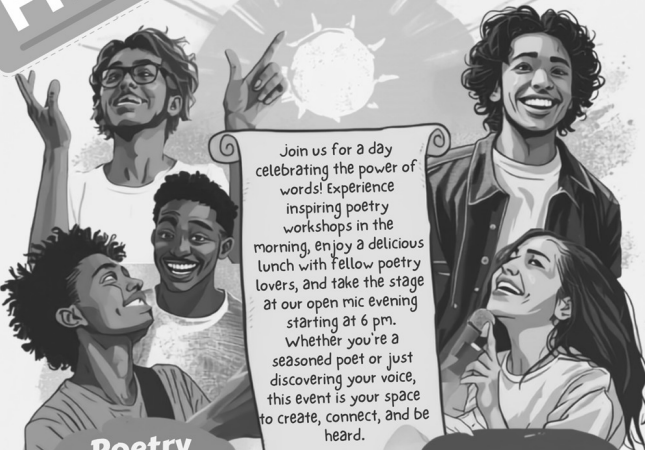
LOCAL
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STALLS

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All proceeds in aid of St Peter's Church

ST MARY'S CHURCH, HALESWORTH

Youth Poetry Day

FREE 11TH AUGUST | STARTS 9 AM



Join us for a day celebrating the power of words! Experience inspiring poetry workshops in the morning, enjoy a delicious lunch with fellow poetry lovers, and take the stage at our open mic evening starting at 6 pm. Whether you're a seasoned poet or just discovering your voice, this event is your space to create, connect, and be heard.

Poetry Workshops
WITH LOCAL POETS

Lunch

Open Mic
at 6PM

Participants - must register in advance with Pauline Milsted -
email: pauline@growingtogetherearlyyears.co.uk

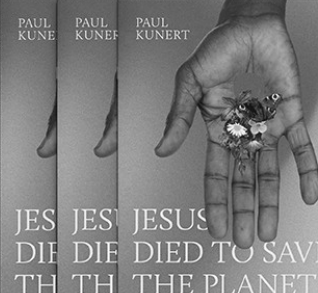
11-18 Year Olds



Church Mice Tots Group
St Mary's Church Hall, Halesworth
Thursday 9-11.00 am
12-30 pm
Restarts: 10th Sept

Season of Creation Life Group

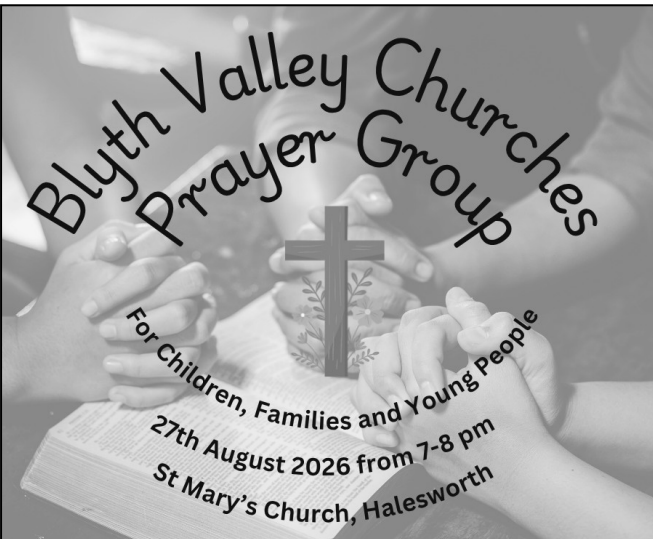
Jim and Sue Green are offering a new group in Halesworth, going through 'Jesus Died to Save the Planet', a booklet by Paul Kunert. It will run on Tuesdays fortnightly for six weeks, 7-9pm, starting on 8th September. We also aim to share life together and pray. The booklet is available to download or get a paper copy from licc.org.uk/planet. Contact Sue (07873 818631) or Jim (07742 032536)




PAUL KUNERT PAUL KUNERT PAUL KUNERT

JESUS DIED TO SAVE THE PLANET

Jesus Died to Save the Planet
On the ridge
I stand on the ridge with my thoughts
whispering - I am not the chosen one
I am just a man. Not Jesus. Not God. For these
years and the world's suffering and
suffering, who has looked and the face
that has saved the world and the face
that has saved the world. What is the
reason for the face that has saved the world?



Blyth Valley Churches Prayer Group

For Children, Families and Young People

27th August 2026 from 7-8 pm
St Mary's Church, Halesworth

WHAT'S ON

Local produce and crafts

From local growers and makers



HALESWORTH PRODUCE MARKET

EST. 2003

**ST. MARY'S
HALESWORTH**
9am - 1pm

FEB 14th	JUL 11th
MAR 14th	AUG 8th
APR 11th	SEP 12th
MAY 9th	OCT 10th
JUN 13th	NOV 14th
DEC 12th	

Blyth Valley Churches

SUMMER

FAMILY PICNICS

Every Thursday in the Summer Holidays from
11:30 am - 1 pm

St Mary's Church, Halesworth
FAMILY FUN | KIDS GAME | FREE PICNIC



Into the

Wild



4th August 2026
1-4 pm

**St Peter's Church,
Thorington**

Family fun and activities - bug hotels,
bug hunts, wildflower activities, bird
watching and so much more.

Refreshments will also be available.



**ST MARY'S
HALESWORTH**

**LUNCHTIME
RECITALS
SERIES**

2026

Wednesday 12th August 2026
12:30pm

HEROES & HEROINES

*Songs, Arias & Duets
for Soprano and Mezzo-Soprano*

Veronica Downing
Soprano

Wendy Slaney
Mezzo-Soprano

with **Jonathan Rutherford**
Piano

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through beautiful songs, arias and duets.*

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Web Address Change

You can now find information about your local Church services and events online here (the old website is defunct):

www.achurchnearyou.com

Church Volunteer Vacancies

A range of volunteer vacancies; an interesting and fulfilling role awaits you! Training provided and you don't have to be a practising Christian.

Contact Annie for further information (p. 17)

WHAT'S ON



NEXT SERVICE IONA WORSHIP

Sunday 23rd August 10am

Huntingfield

an ecumenical service inspired by
experiences of early pilgrimages
to Iona which is both engaging
and meaningful
Led by Jenny Blackmore

BAT EVENING

St Margaret's Church,
Heveningham

26th August 2026 from 8 -10 pm

Join us for an evening of bat fun and
hopefully a sighting of the
Heveningham bats. Fun for the whole
family, join us for hotdogs in the Glebe,
a bat walk, children's activities and a
bat talk.



Halesworth
DISCOVER IT. LIVE IT. LOVE IT



heritage open days



HERITAGE OPEN DAY ST MARY'S CHURCH, HALESWORTH

ALL
FREE!

Explore the history. Experience the heritage.
Celebrate 200 years of the Town Clock.



SATURDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER



**8am
MORNING PRAYER**
In the Lady Chapel



**10am - 1pm
HAVE AGO AT BELL RINGING**
The Halesworth Bell Ringers invite you
to try this ancient art.



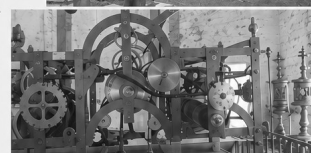
**1pm - 3pm
TOWER TOURS**
Celebrating 200 years of the Town Clock.
Climb the church tower and see the
remarkable 1826 clock mechanism up close.



**3pm - 3.30pm
ORGAN DEMONSTRATION**
Music is at the heart of our worship.
Hear our magnificent Hill, Norman & Beard
organ from 1889.



**6pm
EVENING PRAYER**



ACCESS: Suitable for wheelchair users
(ground floor only)

CONTACT: halesworthparish@gmail.com

2026 PROGRAMME
11TH - 20TH SEPTEMBER



ST. MARY'S CHURCH, HALESWORTH presents

A Tudor Portrait with CHANTER'S JIGGE



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A lively telling of that most famous Elizabethan age,
set forth with tunes, tales and good humour

SUNDAY, 6th SEPTEMBER

3.00 p.m.



TICKETS £10 on the door
(cash or card)



First-hand accounts of intrigue, chivalry, and mischief.
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in a performance both entertaining and enlightening.



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More Photos from Town & Villages



Blyford Summer Solstice Service



A chat with Vic after ordination



1st Holy Communion



Bramfield Flower



Huntingfield PCC Meeting



The cake!



Linstead Flower festival



Bake Off team



Bake Off cakes

Thank you to everyone
for their lovely photos.
Please send to Annie
(p.17).



Linstead Flower festival



Linstead Flower festival



1st Holy Communion at Heveningham



The gifts!



Linstead Flower festival



Linstead Flower festival