

Halesworth and Bramfield URC



Edition 40

July 2023

What we believe

We believe that in obedience to Christ's command, we must proclaim the Gospel to the world in the power and at the direction of the Holy Spirit.

We are called out of darkness to live as children of light, reflecting God's glory all around.

We recognise that as a Church, the bride of Christ, we are commanded to love and encourage one another and ensure that no root of bitterness divides us.

We acknowledge our absolute dependence on Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Father made us, Jesus has redeemed us and the Spirit sustains and provides all we need on our pilgrimage.

We acknowledge our commitment to the Bible, as the authoritative word of God able to teach us, guide us and inspire us as we discover God's perfect will for our lives.

This is the fortieth e-mail instead of our usual magazine (production and printing suspended for the immediate future) I'm trying to put together pages that give up to date Church news and uplifting contributions. So if you have any news or contributions please e-mail

smedleybigal@aol.co

Blessings Alan

**COPY FOR August MAGAZINE BY 22nd July
PLEASE**

**Our Vision:
"To know Jesus Christ;
to make Him known."**

I recently finished reading a book by Pete Greig entitled 'How to Hear God – a simple guide for normal people' and I can't recommend it highly enough! Pete is the senior Pastor at Emmaus Church, Guildford, but you might have heard of him in connection with '24-7 Prayer', a global movement of prayer, mission and justice. The book is split into two sections; in the first Pete examines how we hear God's word in the Bible, prayer and prophecy, and in the second he looks at other ways God communicates, for example: through dreams and the unconscious, and through Conscience, Community, Creation and Culture.

I imagine many of us share the conviction that God speaks, and I hope you agree with me that 'hearing God' is one of our greatest privileges as Christians. But let me now segue into speaking about 'hearing' in a broader context. I recently visited an audiologist who told me I would benefit from wearing hearing aids. I'll admit it, Jean had been nagging me for some time to get my hearing tested, but I kept procrastinating. There seems to be a real or imagined stigma around hearing loss, so the idea of wearing things in my ears was unappealing. Thus, I kept on making excuses.

But then, a couple of months ago, I went and had my hearing tested and, lo and behold, I learned I was missing higher frequencies. So, I now have hearing aids, and the difference is amazing; it's as though someone has turned up the treble on the stereo. The most noticeable difference comes with birdsong. I now hear chirruping, cheeping, chirping, squeaking and shrieking in an entirely different way and I love it! A few days ago, I caught myself trying to mimic a greenfinch, but I couldn't begin to emulate the sweet tones of a blackbird! It's as though Creation has suddenly got a whole lot better!

So, here's a question for you: if there was a hearing aid that could help you hear God better would you wear it? Or would you keep making excuses? I sometimes think about young Samuel sleeping in the Temple (1 Samuel 3). He heard God calling but he thought it was Eli. There was nothing wrong with Samuel's hearing, but he didn't know what he was hearing. Thus, he needed help; he needed Eli, (i.e., 'his faith community'), to identify the speaker. I wonder, then, do you think we all need help like

this? I'm reminded of C.S. Lewis's words in his book 'The Problem of Pain': "God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains."

As a fellowship, I think we are blessed with much collective wisdom and experience, and I believe we can and should minister to one another, especially while Jon is away. Right now, you might be hearing God on 'whisper', (like Elijah in 1 Kings 19), or alternatively, God may be shouting to gain your attention. Either way, it's possible you could profit from some help in making sense of what you're hearing. Whether you do or don't, let's be sure that we're hearing what we're meant to hear, and if you think a real or metaphorical hearing aid could help, don't be as backward as I was!



Peter



SPECIAL BIRTHDAYS IN JULY

27th Chris Dunn 85



Church Family News



Please continue to hold Jon in your prayers as he ministers in Africa, also remember Ruth, who is on her own at this time and is still recovering from her bout of Covid. Also, please continue to hold Christine Dominic, Chris Buttle, and Jean Denmark in your prayers. Alan and Lorraine would also be grateful for prayers, as their grandson Ben has suffered a serious injury at work and is facing long term plastic surgery. Give thanks and pray for our Elders (and others) who are covering for Jon during his Sabbatical. As a church, we are grateful for their blessed and willing ministries.

A couple of pictures from Greyson's dedication





Volunteers

- Coffee Mornings (Fridays)
- Premises Outside Use Organiser
- Premises Condition/Works Organiser
- Other Duties – Greeting/Prayers etc
- Manse Officer
- Open the Book Team



Please speak to an Elder if you would like to volunteer for any of the above

SPECIAL DATES at HURC



Tuesdays
4th and 11th
11th is party day
(9.00am and 10.45am)

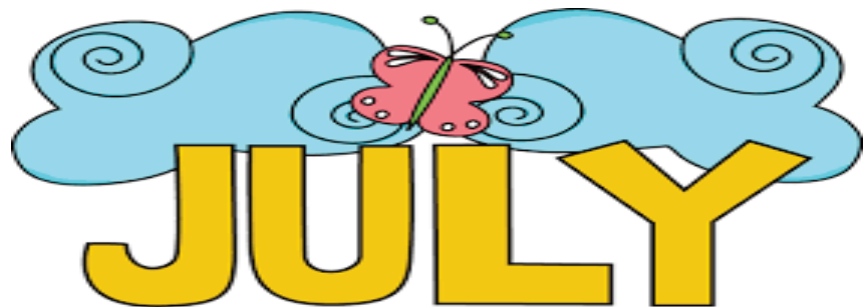


Messy Church
PARTY
Tuesday 11th



No
Breakfast this month





Could you be the one called by God to lead Children & Families work at Halesworth URC?

Sunday 2 nd July	Gathered worship incl. Communion
Friday 7 th July	9.30 am & 10 am Prayer Meeting (in the church & Zoom) 10.30 am Coffee Morning
Sunday 9 th July	11am Gathered worship GIFT DAY see page 15
Friday 14 th July	9.30 am & 10 am Prayer Meeting (in the church & Zoom) 10.30 am Coffee Morning
Sunday 16 th July	11am Gathered worship
Tuesday 18th July	2.30 pm Elders' Meeting in the school room
Friday 21 st July	9.30 am & 10 am Prayer Meeting (in the church & Zoom) 10.30 am Coffee Morning
Sunday 23 rd July	11am Gathered worship
Friday 28 th July	9.30 am & 10 am Prayer Meeting (in the church & Zoom) 10.30 am Coffee Morning
Sunday 30 th July	11am Gathered worship

For Parent and Toddler Groups, Messy Church, messy breakfast, Holiday Bible Club and Sunday Young Families worship



for building relationships, encouragement, Bible teaching, for growing in faith and knowledge of God...

We need an enthusiastic person to be employed, part time (16 hours a week, initially) to share with Minister and Elders in seeking to follow the Holy Spirit in this ministry.

Applications by 15 Sept for interviews in Sept/Oct and start Oct 23 onwards by agreement. The post requires an Enhanced DBS check and it is an occupational requirement that the individual is a practicing Christian.

Contact Jean Wagg

01502 478353

peter@wagg353.plus.com



Teach me, my God and King,
In all things thee to see,
And what I do in anything,
To do it as for thee:

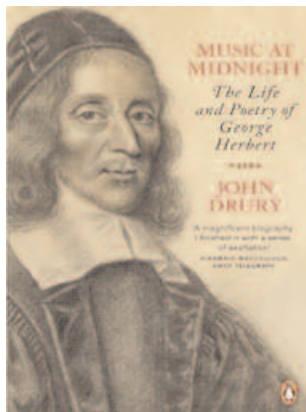
Not rudely, as a beast,
To runne into an action;
But still to make thee prepossest,
And give it his perfection.

A man that looks on glasse,
On it may stay his eye;
Or if he pleaseth, through it passe,
And then the heav'n espie.

All may of thee partake:
Nothing can be so mean,
Which with his tincture (for thy sake)
Will not grow bright and clean.

A servant with this clause
Makes drudgerie divine:
Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,
Makes that and th' action fine.

This is the famous stone
That turneth all to gold:
For that which God doth touch and own
Cannot for lesse be told.



I was musing on school assemblies today, day-dreaming perhaps, probably because we'd just done an Open the Book session at our local primary school. How different from my school days when we had a mini "act of worship" with prayers, a reading and a hymn (our headmaster exhorted the boys to stop growling and make a better effort). A favourite hymn was the poem opposite, sung to a quite brisk and perky tune, although I do not recall singing verse 2, it's actually hard to sing in the tune we used so we were probably singing the tidied-up Wesley version.

The poem is The Elixir by George Herbert 1593-1633, an all-round lovely man by all accounts, loved by his parishioners. His collection of religious poems, The Temple, quickly sold 20,000 copies, a large number at that time. Several of them have become popular hymns; they show a warm, genuine faith, not without its struggles, and an unassuming character. He wrote his own version of Psalm 23, centuries before Stuart Townend, and Love ("Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back, Guilty of dust and sin") which many of us will have heard at least once on a radio poetry programme, or come across while studying the metaphysical poets at school (is that still done, I wonder?)

Katherine Langrish, who also sang "Teach me my God and King" at school wrote "The success of Herbert's poetry is partly in his ability to articulate things we feel we have always known but never said so well. Light can pass through glass, yet glass can also obscure what is behind it. St Paul's words 'now we see as through a glass, darkly; but then face to face' (1 Corinthians 13:12) must surely have been in his mind as he wrote that verse. For Herbert, God was the light behind the glass, the light which illumines the world."

God was, in fact, the only true elixir, the only source of eternal life.

And like Herbert we can pray "Thou who hast given so much to me, give me one more thing...a grateful heart"

Val Jennings

For Sign of the Fish



On the Outside Looking In - John 20 : 24

I'm surrounded by mad men!

At the beginning of the week I decided to venture out and see what was happening after the events of the Passover: so I spent the day skulking on street corners. I mingled with the crowds, listening to every conversation, even in dark corners of inns, trying to find out if any further reprisals were in the wind. I wanted a chance for us to get away in time.

I didn't return until well after dark, always making sure that I wasn't being followed. After giving the secret knock, I was shocked when the door was suddenly flung open by John Mark's mother, who seemed to be in hysterics. I thought that the temple police must have been to the house already and taken the others away but then I realised that she wasn't crying... but laughing! In fact, I've never seen her so merry, an elderly widow and giggling like an empty-headed youngster. She was obviously feeling the effects of strong wine and I flew to the upper room to give someone a piece of my mind. We all needed to be very careful and keep our wits about us at a time like this. I realise that it's been a shocking time for the women, it has for all of us, but we can't let them compromise our safety by using strong drink to take the edge off their grief.

It was then I entered the mad house. They were all in the same state, grinning at me like demented fools and all talking at once. I was furious. I launched into a very loud and angry speech about the **danger** we were in...The danger I'd been in all day trying to save their necks! The room was suddenly silent. Startled faces all turned towards me. Then the silence was suddenly broken by a tremendous guffaw of laughter, exploding and rumbling round the room. Levi grabbed me and said, "It's all right! He's been here, tonight!"

"He's been here? WHO has been here?" I demanded. Then I knew that they had all of them lost their reason when, with one voice, they all said, '**The Master!**' and proceeded to gabble out their own stories, all talking at the same time. I stood appalled, watching my friends caught up in some mass madness. That they all believed what they said, I had no doubt. You only had to look at their eager faces, their eyes shining with tears and joy. And I would be the last one to rob them of comfort at this time: but there was no

point in fooling themselves. They would have to face the fact of Jesus' death sometime and, anyway, how could we hope to slip quietly out of Jerusalem and back to our families with them in this state? We would need to get out quite soon, the authorities would be bound to want to 'mop up' any remaining followers of Jesus before long. I told them, rather brutally, that I did not believe a word of it and neither **would** I believe, until I could put my finger in the wounds where the nails had been and my fist in to his spear torn side. That stopped the mindless gabble. Yes, I did feel terrible to deflate them like that, but you must be able to see that it had to be done?

Since that evening, exactly 8 days ago, the hysterics have ceased but there is still an undercurrent of (what I have to call) excitement ... and there have been some strange changes. John and James now. Jesus used to call them 'sons of thunder', always arguing, trying to be 'top dog' like Jacob and Esau, constantly verbally 'wrestling'. At the moment they aren't just agreeable they are positively peaceful, especially John. Simon, on the other hand, (although also uncharacteristically calm) seems quietly brooding. Like the others, he is also full of this silly idea about Jesus, but there is definitely something, deep down, that troubles him.

So, I am on my way back to John Mark's house and I will prepare to eat a meal with people I have spent the last 3 years getting to know very well and now can hardly recognise. I feel that I don't know them any more. They have all tried to persuade me that Jesus really did visit them last week, but I will hear none of it. Somehow, they have been changed and I haven't ... and although I know it is unreasonable, they seem to be stronger for this mad belief. I wish I could feel this hope, like them, but I have always been a man of common sense, I saw what happened to the Master. I have seen Roman crucifixions by the dozen and I know that no one comes back from that. **No!**

I, Thomas, am a man of reason and practical thinking. I am **no** dreamer and I can-not go along with this foolishness. Let me see the nail marks and the spear wound and THEN, **I will believe**.....

Lorraine

Yesterday was the 4th and final session with the Bible college students. Even better. The Spirit has been powerfully at work.

James, the college Principal, is really pleased saying that this, Dunamis based/inspired teaching on the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit is just what the students needed. With the practical outworking in prayer sessions an added benefit on top.

The thanks expressed by the students was fulsome. To Jesus Christ be praise and glory!

They want to go further with this teaching/experience of the Holy Spirit and I have explained how Dunamis Fellowship now offer events on Zoom which are accessed from many countries. I have given the website address.

So, as stage one of the Zimbabwe leg of my African adventure comes to fruition, I leave at 9 this morning (8 for you) for the long drive to Bulawayo. I hope to have internet there, some of the time, so email & WhatsApp should be possible. Phone still not resolved. I can receive texts but can't send them and can't send or receive phone calls.

Thank you. And please keep praying

And also sincere thanks to all of you. Your prayer support has been a major factor in all this

Blessings

Jon

Students receiving certificates

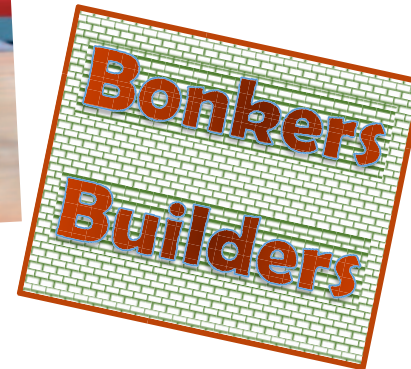


Teaching in classroom

Paraclete School acting Prov. 3:5



*Our gift day will be Sunday 9th July
The money will be used to help families go to
Spring Harvest 2024*



Holiday Bible Club 2023

Tuesday 1st - Friday 4th August.

Many of us (adults and children) enjoy a bit of construction, whether it's Lego, wooden blocks or real bricks! There are a few crazy construction projects in the bible and we will be learning about these during the holiday club as well as having fun doing our own creating and constructing. Please speak to Jo if you would like to be involved and help in any way, even if you are not sure how!



If you are in a hole stop digging.

By Martin Dominic

The old adage “If you are in hole stop digging” has been around for as long as I can remember. It is advice that is given by a friend or colleague to someone who is

making a difficult situation worse by their actions or attitudes. The term probably originated in the construction or mining industries where digging holes is a hazardous task.

Today the whole of humanity is in a hole of our own making: climate change and the degradation of the natural world. The damage we have done, and what we need to do to avoid impending catastrophe is very well documented. Our dilemma is that the economic theories and practices which have evolved over the past few hundred years have served commerce, manufacturing and governments well and has enabled perpetual economic growth. However, this economic “success” has for several decades been imposing an ever-greater burden on the natural world: which is also very well documented.

One of the great stumbling blocks preventing effective mitigation action being taken is the probability that it will create a legacy of high value stranded assets. It is estimated that stranded reserves of coal oil and gas and large parts of the built infrastructure will become redundant, at a cost of Trillions of pounds to their owners. The loss of these assets, and potential revenue generated by them in taxes is also of great concern to national governments.

Another stumbling block is the conviction by national governments that perpetual economic growth can be sustained using green energy, which may or may not be true. Even if renewable energy capacity can be increased to meet the demands of an economy that is perpetually growing, some essential raw materials that can be mined on dry land are becoming critically scarce. The result of our mineral extraction operations and industrial farming has substantially degraded soil fertility, bio-diversity and major forests. To recover from the damage

already done will take generations. The growing scarcity of essential minerals is encouraging major players in the mining community to begin developing technologies that will enable them to exploit the deep ocean bottom for metallic nodules, that are found in abundance. Already conferences are being held to delineate the boundaries of licence blocks in which mining companies can operate. Having already trashed the continents the same players will, by default, cause unimaginable harm to sea creatures as the ocean currents carry the mining detritus, in dense clouds of fine sea- bed silt, around the world.

In a report, “Global Material Resources Outlook to 2060” published by the OECD in 2011 calculated that Global material usage would increase from 79 Gigatonnes in 2011 to 167 Gigatonnes in 2060, and that the extraction and processing these raw materials would result in Greenhouse gas emissions of around 50 Gigatonnes of carbon dioxide-equivalent. Processing these materials also has a wide range of polluting consequences with toxic effects. If mankind proceeds in the future as we have behaved in the past two centuries the outlook for a habitable planet Earth is dire. This is the hole we are in.

The global economy is dominated by very large corporations, Asset management companies, Hedge Funds and Banks, who operate within a legal structure and tax regimes administered by National governments. Also globally, in many varying cultures and countries, the purchasing public have agency in deciding outcomes. The titans of industry depend on customers buying their products, and at the bottom of the pyramid are the general public whose purchases underpin the whole economic structure. Cash flow is important to large companies and by stop buying non-essential purchases we can severely disrupt the functioning of even the largest corporation. To stop digging we need to be much more disciplined about our purchasing choices. Stop digging: Ignore promotional advertising and influencers. Any change will be disruptive but at least we will have a habitable planet.

The Dunamis Project is a 6-part equipping programme in the power of the Holy Spirit. Exactly what the church needs in an era when we are receiving so many prophetic indications that God may be preparing us for the next 'Great Awakening'



Here in East Anglia, as many of you know, I lead the team delivering this. And it comes to fruition in October with the final session '**Listening Evangelism**'.

Why **Listening**...?

Unlike most evangelism courses, this is more about prayerfully listening - together in small groups - to the guidance of the Holy Spirit than any technique. We learn to engage with people as God leads. It takes away the pressure that the word 'evangelism' sometimes conjures up.

We need to be equipped, not reliant solely on our human strengths and abilities, if we are to fulfil the Great Commission of making disciples of all Nations (Matt 28)

This really is for all Christians – whether or not you came to any of our 5 previous sessions. And it is conveniently local. The Pakefield (South Lowestoft) Pontins Holiday Camp.

And the cost is less than half what the conference centre was (including breakfast & dinner, but not lunch)

Bookings **are open** via the Dunamis website www.dunamis.org.uk

It helps to plan ahead and booking in soon will secure chalets near the main venue on the campus as well as helping us plan & prepare.

Blessings Jon

Do you have cleaning, housekeeping, gardening or odd job skills?

**Are you a Christian looking for some voluntary or paid work?
Would you like to serve in a place of healing and restoration?**



If so, we want to hear from you. My husband and I run a Christian charity called New Chapel Farm, a 3 acre plot near Halesworth with 2 buildings, a third under construction, a 900 year old ancient chapel ruin, two meadows, a prayer pod, a pond and 2 small orchards.

You can find out more about us on our website:

www.newchapelfarm.org.uk

For 6 years we have run the farm from a distance but we have recently moved to live on site and as the work is expanding, we want to build a small team of local people to help us care for this amazing facility and support the work. If you are interested, please message or call me on

07881 930312

Thanks
Claire Tinkler