

# Halesworth



## and Bramfield URC



**November 2025**

### **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

**If you have something for the  
December magazine,  
please email  
[smedleybigal@aol.com](mailto:smedleybigal@aol.com) (preferably)  
or hand it to me by 22nd November**

**Blessings, Alan**

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

Dear Friends

We are now noticing more changes in the weather, the scenery and the 'feel' of everything as Autumn settles in. The changing seasons of the year can be evocative of changing seasons in life. This is something that struck me particularly, as I am heading towards retirement at the end of the year.

Church ministers, along with people in a few other areas of work are usually provided with accommodation that goes with the job. This means, of course, that retirement bring a house move. In our case, Ruth & I will be moving to Northamptonshire, near to some family members.

A heightened awareness of the changing seasons of life, because of this, may well help enhance my pastoral awareness of such issues as faced by others. I certainly hope so.

The churches I serve, not just here in Halesworth but also North Lowestoft URC, face big changes as a result of my retirement: It may take some time to work out the details but what is known is that there will not be a replacement on the same basis (a full time post shared between Halesworth & Lowestoft). These two churches will probably be joined with three others, to form a 'Mission Partnership'. This is the new model our denomination is working with, to address the shortage of ministers. (New ordinations have been significantly out-paced by retirements for many years!). One minister will cover 5 churches quite widely spread geographically.

New ways of enhancing the input (provided by lay people) will be needed, not only for however long it may take to form the Mission Partnership and call a minister to it, but also thereafter.

The benefit of the new life within the church as fruit of the Awake Suffolk Coastal Mission will be an encouraging factor. But it will also be a challenging time. Please pray for us, both your church and your sister congregation at Lowestoft, as we face a future that is uncertain, but certainly will involve significant change.

And pray for those who will step up and contribute more to the leadership of the local churches. Also seek God on the part you are to play...

Blessings

Jon



Lorraine Smedley is waiting for further medical appointments while continuing to struggle with pain in her legs and feet. Please pray for her.

Moirra Cooke facing the possibility of an operation in the near future.

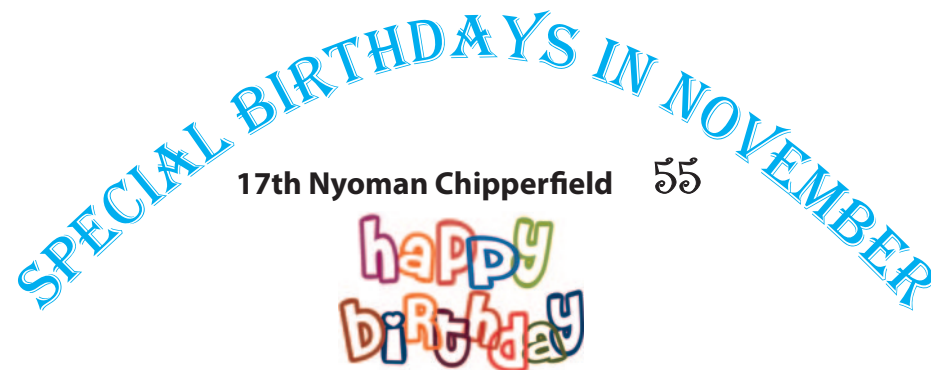
Peter & Funmi, Enoch, Ephraim & Eunice have moved to Lowestoft. Please pray for them as they settle there.

Please continue to pray for Kathryn Bones, Margeret Long, Christine Dominic, Eileen McAllister, Michael Gilbert, Ruth Sermon and others you know of in need.

Blessings

Jon

*David and Rosemary Wright  
No longer have a phone landline  
Contact on 07845 076665*



Alma was thrilled to receive a card from the friends at Halesworth it was a lovely day. **THANK YOU**



Hello Church!

Over the past few years, I have been designing Greetings Cards...nothing special, but I now find myself with a growing collection of art work and am wondering what to do with it all, when it occurred to me that I might offer the various paintings and sketches for "sale": with the money raised to go to Ukraine. I have discussed this with Jo Small and she is willing to witness whatever money is raised and send it to the people she is working with, who bring help and relief to the folk there. I will publish the amount raised in the Magazine.

With Christmas just around the corner, this might be an idea for a "different" sort of gift? ...so, what I am proposing to do is to bring the pictures and put them out in the foyer of the church, each Sunday in November. Folk can look through the pictures and (if there is anything that appeals to them) they can take it (or however many pictures they want) and leave a donation, (whatever they feel appropriate) in the box Marked for Ukraine. I hope you might find this a good idea?... both for the recipients of the 'art work', as well as the dear folk of Ukraine.

Love and Blessings to you all,

*Lorraine*



## SPECIAL DATES at HURC

### Halesworth United Reformed Church

Come and  
join us for:



Suggested donation £1 Per Person

**Tuesdays 3:30pm - 5pm**

**November 4th & 18th**

Book with Elizabeth - [familyhurc@gmail.com](mailto:familyhurc@gmail.com)



**Tuesday 4th, 11th, 18th & 25th**



**HURC Too  
Every Sunday**



**Messy Breakfast  
15th**



**Crafty Cuppa 29th  
10.00 - 11.30**



Jo Small has made a huge effort to collect donations of bedding, food, medical and hygiene needs and clothing etc etc to send to Ukraine via HAAD. I think she ended up with 72 banana boxes full in her garage, mainly from Wenhaston villagers, which were collected in a motorhome last week!

"Hope And Aid Direct (HAAD) has been taking aid to Ukraine now for several years. Many of our congregation have donated generously over some time and HAAD is very grateful for this. Now they are launching a Christmas Appeal for children's toys and games and also seasonal food gifts for families. These could include chocolates, sweets, cakes, such as Stollen, and other Christmassy delights. Our contact for this is Carole who lives in Caister but has a family connection with the warehouse in Essex, to which goods are taken. Carole would also be very happy to visit our church and talk about the work of HAAD with pictures to show. She is planning to attend the Toddler group on Tuesday November 4th to talk to parents, with Elizabeth's agreement, and maybe stay on for Messy church later that afternoon. I'm sure anyone would be welcome to pop in and hear more about this charitable organisation! But please bring any relevant donations to church in the next few weeks and we can make sure they are delivered to Carole. Many thanks!"

Esther



[www.hopeandaiddirect.org.uk](http://www.hopeandaiddirect.org.uk)

Nature may be settling down for a long sleep at this time of year. However, God never sleeps nor slumbers! So, as we prepare for our minister's retirement, let's ask God for this to be a month of awakening for us.

Here is a beautiful prayer on this theme. I found it on the online blog I use. It's by Christian writer Keonna Shaw. I believe it is timely for us.

Every blessing,

Ruth Sermon.

### **Prayer of Awakening**

**by Keonna Shaw**

Lord, awaken every seed You've planted in us—seeds of purpose, seeds of courage, seeds of faith. Restore what was lost, revive what has been dormant, and strengthen us to finish what You started.

God help us release what You've placed inside with boldness and trust. Remind us that every gift, every dream, and every word you've spoken has its time to bloom.

As we enter November, remind us that You are not bound by time—You redeem time. Help us to start where we are, with what we have, to give ourselves grace to grow, to obey even when we don't feel confident, because You have trusted and chosen us for this calling.

In Jesus' name. Amen.



Everything has gone "Virtual"! (well, a lot of things...). And it includes that the 'Upper Room' experience of the first followers of Jesus, waiting for the empowerment of the Holy Spirit (Luke 3: 15-16, John 14: 15-27, Acts 1: 5,8, Acts 2).

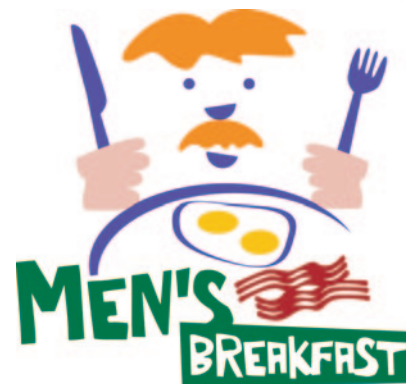


The startling reality: Jesus wants to equip His church for mission, by the Power of the Holy Spirit! We have just seen him powerfully at work through the mission. He wants to enable us all the more for the follow-up!

The Dunamis Fellowship Britain & Ireland are offering sessions on Zoom to prepare the ground and pray with people to receive. One such comes up on Tuesday 4 November. You can go to the website: [www.dunamis.org.uk](http://www.dunamis.org.uk) to book a place!

I will be giving Bible teaching at it and leading some of the prayers.

Blessings Jon



**Saturday 8th  
November  
from 9.30 a.m**



Saturday	1st	ALPHA Away Day – Encountering the Holy Spirit In the Church 10.00 a.m. – 3.00 p.m).	
Sunday	2nd	11 a.m.	Gathered Worship Minister Jon Sermon
		3.00 p.m	Healing Service at <b>Lowestoft</b>
Tuesday	4th	10 a.m. to 12 noon Coffee morning at Lowestoft followed by Morning Worship  Virtual Upper Room on Zoom	
Friday	7th	9.45 a.m.	Prayer Meeting in the Church and Zoom followed by Coffee Morning
Saturday	8th	Mens Breakfast 9.30 a.m	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>9th</b>	<b>10.50 a.m.</b>	<b>REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY</b> Gathered Worship Mr Paul Potts
		<b>3 p.m.</b>	<b>Bramfield Chapel</b> Minister Jon Sermon
Tuesday	11th	10 a.m. to 12 noon Coffee morning at Lowestoft followed by Morning Worship	
		2.30 p.m	Elders Meeting



Friday	14th	9.45 a.m.	Prayer Meeting in the Church and Zoom followed by Coffee Morning
Sunday	16th	11.00 a.m.	Gathered Worship Minister Jon Sermon
Tuesday	18th	10 a.m. to 12 noon Coffee morning at Lowestoft followed by Morning Worship	
Friday	24th	9.30 am	Prayer Meeting in the Church and Zoom followed by Coffee Morning
Sunday	23th	11 a.m.	Gathered Worship Paul Potts and Lorraine Smedley
Tuesday	25th	10 a.m. to 12 noon Coffee morning at Lowestoft followed by Morning Worship	
Friday	28th	9.45 am	Prayer Meeting in the Church and Zoom followed by Coffee Morning
Saturday	29th	11.00 a.m - 3.00 p.m Interactive Nativity at <b>Lowestoft</b>	
Sunday	30th	11 a.m.	Gathered Worship Minister Jon Sermon
		3.00 p.m Churches Together joint Advent worship	



### *Handel's Messiah Isa 40:3 – 5*

*Quite some time ago, I placed some thoughts on the beginning of Handel's Messiah in the magazine, hoping that it might interest some of my brothers and sisters to listen to the work. My, personal admiration for this Masterpiece is total...I hope you will forgive this repetition and that the following might encourage people, who haven't heard much of the work (with the exception of the "Hallelujah Chorus" or "Unto us a son is born!") to take a 'dip' into Handel's setting of a well known prophecy from Isaiah.....*

***Isaiah 40 : 3 "A voice of him that cry-eth in the wilderness,..... Prepare ye, the Way of the Lord. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God."***

800 years after Isaiah wrote this prophecy, a man called John, a man devoted to God, who lived in the wilderness almost all of his life, would be asked if **he** was the Messiah. He replied with a resounding "NO," but he went on to quote these very words, proclaiming not only his own God appointed role in preparing the way for the real Messiah, but also the opportune time when in our, personal, wilderness lives, we will hear that same proclamation and experience the preparing of that highway for God to come to us, as an individual. As the tenor sings this momentous promise, the orchestral accompaniment is limited simply to a chord, or two, at the end of each line and the tenor's lone voice rings out in the concert hall, alone, but momentous...just like John the Baptist! An affective clarion call of hope and promise, which will be enlarged upon in the next stanza.

***Isaiah 40 : 4 "Every Valley Shall Be Exalted..... and every mountain and hill laid low; the crooked straight and the rough places plain."***

"This is how it will be!..." Picture, if you will, two lovers, about to embark on their future, married life; their heads close together, eyes bright, excitedly sharing with each other their wedding day dreams. Planning (in delighted anticipation) how the day will begin; what will happen; the flowers; the weather they hope for; the reception. They muse about the bridesmaids; family and friends, all gathering to make a perfect and memorable day. The lovers also dream dreams of the joys in their future life, in that special "one flesh" relationship. Handel captures this emotion very delightfully in an effervescent melody and orchestral frolic. There is an unstoppable, forward momentum about the whole piece, underlying the prophet (Isaiah's) picture of the road upon which the eternal Bridegroom will travel to claim His Bride (redeemed humanity.) THIS road will have no barriers; no traffic jams; no twists and turns; no mountains or deep ravines and no rough ground. There will be nothing to hinder the way of Messiah (the Anointed One) to where His people are bound and held captive.

The refrain proceeds with ebullient certainty, changing key a number of times (expressing the undulations of the road which is being made smooth) and with the same melodic line inexorably advancing, no matter whether the key is raised or lowered from its original. Handel grasps the exhilaration of this promise, made by the Great Lover to His beloved, that nothing ("neither height, nor depth, nor anything in all creation", Romans 8 : 38 & 39) will keep Him from coming to her rescue...and God always keeps His promises. 800 years before the birth of Christ, the preparation for His undercover, rescue mission was already being declared by Isaiah to Israel, indeed they had been set into operation from "the beginning" (see Genesis 3: 15.) The road was being prepared, the time and place already decided.

***Isaiah 40 : 5 "And the Glory of the Lord..... shall be exalted and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed. And all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it."***

Now the choir make their debut, in full voice! ..representing the Hosts of Heaven who are viewing Isaiah's prophecy, from outside of time and space. Long before Phil Spector's "Wall of Sound" in the 1960's, Handel uses the "layering" of all the voices in the choir: Soprano, Tenor, Alto, Bass, as well as that of the orchestra, to form a sound which seems much greater than the individual parts which make it up. This is a technique often found in Baroque composition and Handel uses it with mastery, to paint amazingly varied and wild pictures, throughout this entire work.

Here, Heaven victoriously announces to earthly history, to every spiritual realm and to every unimaginable dimension of God's creation, the revelation of His immutable glory and His purposes both within and beyond time. Very often Handel uses the different range of voices in the choir (Soprano, Tenor, Alto, Bass) to give the sense, not only of multitudes, but also of different kinds of "creature." Here, he has them singing different melodic lines and words, interweaving, answering, forming harmonies etc. to convey a sense of immeasurable, eternal spaces and an unimaginable panoply of different creatures. The Orchestra sets the scene of majestic solemnity and the choir pronounces the wonder of God's glory and His plan for "all flesh." I find an immense sense of praise and wonder in the repeated affirmation of God's Glory, with each "voice" expounding their praise in their own, metre and "colour", then reforming with the whole choir and musicians in stately harmony. In the last few bars, the sopranos ascend to a higher register, as though they are wildly escaping towards the higher reaches of heaven, but not for too long. The

choir returns to formal harmonies, bringing this song of praise to a stately completion, because Handel now wants us to hear from another couple of prophets, namely Haggai and Malachi. They are waiting to announce their own revelations from The Almighty, speaking of His salvation for errant humanity!

I do hope you have the chance to listen to this section of "Messiah" and that the experience "feeds" your heart and spirit. Much love in Jesus,

Lorraine



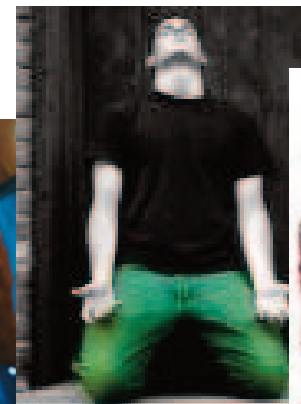
# A BIG THANK YOU

For all the birthday cards and good wishes I received

Love Anne Pointer

# Healing?

## Is it part of our real spiritual experience?



**Explore this with us Sunday 2 November 2025: 3pm**  
**@ North Lowestoft URC (London Rd North NR32 1HB)**

In a gentle, prayerful environment, in the context of worship centered on Jesus Christ, we pray for peoples' needs with the option to receive individual prayer  
***No brash promises. Just an understanding that the healing ministry of Jesus continues through the Church***

More info from Rev'd Jon Sermon (01986) 873761

email: [pastorjonsermon@gmail.com](mailto:pastorjonsermon@gmail.com)





# Advent Tea & Worship

Join with churches across the area for an ecumenical celebration and shared tea:

**Advent Sunday, 30th November @ 3.00pm**  
*followed by 'bring & share' tea*

**Venue: Halesworth URC, Quay Street IP19 8EP**



It may be worth travelling to Lowestoft for this? It will not be us putting it on, but we are contributing alongside Marina Theatre and various Community groups. It happens in our North Lowestoft Church building:

## **Interactive Nativity**

All day event alongside the Christmas Market organised by the Town

Council. Families are invited to an interactive Nativity, enabling parents and children to experience something of the journey to Bethlehem, encounter Herod, Romans, Mary & Joseph and Jesus as a baby. This is now the 3rd year running we have hosted this event. It will result in dozens of people coming into the church. Our input will be helping them understand the true meaning of Christmas.

**Saturday 29 November, 11am – 3pm**

**Venue: North Lowestoft URC, London Road North NR32 1HB**  
And we can invite friends & family

## The Coming of Jesus

# Advent Bible Studies



Mondays 1, 8, 15 & 22 December, 10.30 – 12.00 midday

@ North Lowestoft United Reformed Church

London Road North, Lowestoft NR32 1HB

*Exploring Bible themes around expectancy and the coming of Jesus, friendly discussion, sharing & worship*

Feel free to come to as many sessions as you can. Invite friends.

**Open to those not connected with the church as well as those who are.**

Contact: [pastorjonsermon@gmail.com](mailto:pastorjonsermon@gmail.com)



## Volunteers

Coffee Mornings (Fridays)

Other Duties Greeting/Prayers etc

Manse Officer

Open the Book Team and organiser

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

