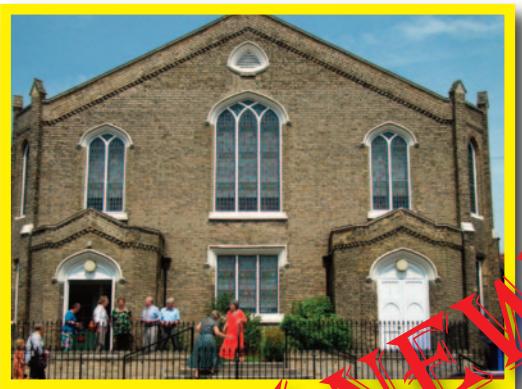
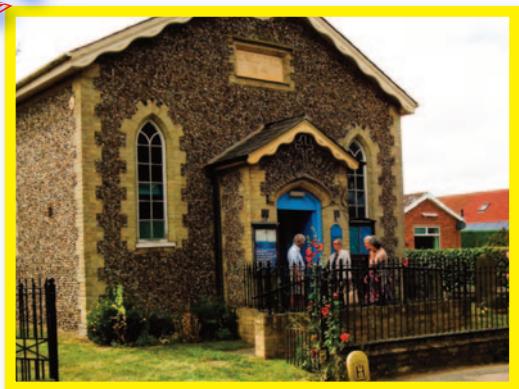


Halesworth and Bramfield URC



HAPPY NEW YEAR



January 2026

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 February 2026 magazine, please email smedleybigal@aol.com (preferably) or hand it to me by 22nd January

Blessings, Alan

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

SPECIAL BIRTHDAYS IN JANUARY

2nd Sheila Brown 90



Please lift Moira in your prayers. At last she has the date for her new knee operation - 9th January at the JPH

Continue to pray for Doug Mizon for his full recovery



Tuesday 2nd December 2025 Dear, kind Church,

Many thanks to you all for your immense generosity in contributing to the sale of Lorraine's Art works. All the contributions were sent to "Hope and Aid Direct" I can confirm that **a total of £275** was transferred (on the date above) to "Hope and Aid Direct": via bank transfer.

They have asked for their grateful thanks to be passed on to you all.

Please Keep praying for Ukraine.. Lorraine



Hello folks! I have recently changed my mobile 'phone number. If any of you want my mobile number it is:- 07586321808 Lorraine

December Family and Youth News

Over the month of December, we have been looking at all the aspects of the birth of our saviour. During our Sunday Family services, we have taken a deeper look into the bible about how we can receive messages from God, as well as how God helps guide us through the different journeys in our lives.

Messy Church has just begun its new format supported by the Messy Church organisation with a two-year training course called Messy Momentum. Our Messy Church is using their new pilot scheme called Pick 'n' Mix which helps guide us in how to include all ages and create a Messy Church that is more encouraging and interesting for our youth ages 11-15 years. We have had an influx of this age group attending more regularly and have found it very encouraging to see. All the families that have been attending Messy Church have been exploring the birth of Jesus, and we had our Christmas Party to end the term on the 16th December. Everyone had a lovely time taking part in lots of games and crafts, with fun had by all.

Our Toddler Group has been very busy with a few new parents/carers and their babies and toddlers joining us each week. Our crafts for the toddlers have been based on Christmas and winter themes as we take a more subtle approach to sharing Christianity with them. They have had fun exploring our nativity scenes and reading about the birth of Jesus as we share with them the true meaning of Christmas. In the New Year we will be using our craft table to introduce crafts that share more of the bible with the toddlers.

We have also enjoyed an evening with our older children and their parents taking part in lots of Christmas Crafts, whilst we had Hot Chocolates and sweet treats.



SPECIAL DATES at HURC

Halesworth United Reformed Church

Come and
join us for:



Suggested donation £1 Per Person

Tuesdays 3:30pm - 5pm

January 13th & 27th

Book with Elizabeth - familyhurc@gmail.com



Tuesday 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th



**HURC Too
Every Sunday
ALL IN SERVICE 25th**



**Messy Breakfast
10th**





Sunday 28th December 2025 11.00 am **Gathered Worship**
Judy Morton

Tuesday 30th December 2025 10 a.m. to 12 noon Coffee morning at
Lowestoft followed by Morning Worship

Friday 2nd 9.45 a.m. Prayer Meeting in the Church and Zoom
 followed by Coffee Morning

Sunday 4th January 2026 11.a.m.

Gathered Worship Peter Wagg
“Farewell to Minister Jon”
Followed by Shared Lunch

Sunday 11th 11.00 a.m. Gathered Worship
 Mr Michael Homfray- Cooper



Tuesday 13th 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon Coffee morning at Lowestoft
 followed by Morning Worship

Friday 16th 9.45 a.m. Prayer Meeting in the Church and Zoom
 followed by Coffee Morning

Sunday 18th 11.00 a.m. Gathered Worship TBA

Tuesday 20th 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon Coffee morning at Lowestoft
 followed by Morning Worship

Friday 23rd 9.45 a.m. Prayer Meeting in the Church and Zoom
 followed by Coffee Morning

Sunday 25th 11.00 a.m. Morning Service Elizabeth Aslett

Tuesday 27th 10 a.m. to 12 noon Coffee morning at Lowestoft
 followed by Morning Worship

Friday 30th 9.45 a.m. Prayer Meeting in the Church and Zoom
 followed by Coffee Morning

Sunday 1st February 11.a.m. **Gathered Worship TBA**

Visitors

How would you feel if you found a retinue of servants, dressed in silks and turbans, standing at your door? And, what if there were also camels (whose bespangled harness must have each cost a year's wages) disdainfully resting near the well? To cap it all, what if there were also other distinguished, dignified and exotic visitors, even more sumptuously dressed than their ostentatious retinue, asking **you** where they could find the child born to be King? I would guess this would not be an everyday occurrence? It was something that I had never imagined, I can tell you! Let me tell you all about it from the beginning...

It's been an odd couple of years really. I'm sure you remember the situation...general chaos because the Roman Emperor decided to make his Judean "subjects" register their existence in the home town of their tribal ancestry. Because of this, our house was full of relatives we hadn't seen for donkey's years. We had just been settling down for the evening, when Joseph (another, distant and obviously distraught relative) arrived with his new wife and begged us to take them in. Before calling at our home, Joseph had called at the homes of his "closer" relatives living here in Bethlehem... however, NONE of them would have anything to do with his wife... and they refused to give them lodging, despite (or perhaps BECAUSE OF) her "delicate" condition.

As I stood, watching and listening to Caleb (my husband, who was trying to find a way to say that we had no room!) I looked past the men and saw Joseph's young wife. I wondered whatever was Joseph thinking, bringing her on a journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem in THAT state? There are times when I seriously wonder if the men in our family have any common sense at all. Well, she suddenly doubled up in pain and I recognized a woman in serious labour. I pushed the men out of the way and barked at them that there would soon be a new family member making its appearance and that there was a lot of work to do, RIGHT NOW! I set the men to clear a decent space in the animal's quarters, on the ground floor of the house, because that was the only space available. Better than nothing, but it needed to be made as clean as possible. (Caleb knows better than to argue with me in times of crisis, so my orders were attended to with alacrity by all the male members of the household.)

The younger women and the girls sorted pails, bowls of water, clean cloths and towels. They set lamps in place in the stable, we older women prepared Mary (the Mum to be) and "shooed" the men to set more pales of water on the fire for hot water when it was needed...as well as put some clean straw in the feeding trough, as a "make shift" cradle. We made Mary (poor girl) as comfortable as possible whilst the labour continued and some of us mounted a strict guard on the animals' quarters. (There would be no room for the men to be fussing and getting in the way as the labour developed.... When the baby had arrived, been bathed and wrapped in swaddling cloths...and when Mary had been freshened up and was proudly sitting with her newborn, we would condescend to let the men in, along with some of the children, to greet the new arrival.)

You know, there's something about a baby that makes everyone feel hopeful and in awe. When we were all admiring the baby, we shared some wine to celebrate and congratulated Joseph. He and Mary were grateful to have the animal quarters to sleep in, so we all settled down for a night's sleep: or so we had thought!

In the early hours of the morning, we were awakened by some barmy shepherds, crashing around and celebrating that they had found the baby! I have no idea of what they had been drinking to keep the cold out that night, but they were babbling something about being told (by an ANGEL, of all things!) that this baby was special; that he had been born in a stable and THEY were to come and welcome Him! I ask you...is that likely? Everyone knows that shepherds are the lowest of the low, smelly and not respectable at all...as if an angel of God would ask THEM to welcome a special baby! Hah! Who was looking after their sheep? That's what I'd like to know.... I would never have thought that shepherds were interested in babies either; but this lot did seem to be really taken with Mary's child, and no mistake! Eventually they all calmed down and returned to their sheep back on the hills (waking quite a lot of people on the way, I would have thought) but, at last, we settled down for what was left of a night's sleep.

It was taking some time for everyone to register for the emperor's tax but, eventually, our visitors dwindled and we were able to let Joseph and

his family sleep in the house. They were a nice couple and Mary seemed to be a pleasant girl (who knows what happened there?) Anyway, they didn't seem to be in a hurry to return to Nazareth. They have been with us for a couple of years now and, during that time, Joseph has been doing some carpentry for people around and about... Their boy has started to walk and talk ... as babies tend to do!

So, it was yesterday when the visit of those exotic strangers took us all aback. I had never seen anything like them and when they asked about a child (born to be king!) I told them that the only child I knew about was Joseph's, but they were an ordinary family, no royal connections that I knew of: well,... except (of course) that our ancestor, David, **was** the King of Israel about a thousand years ago! When I (laughingly) mentioned that, they became very excited and asked to see the child immediately, so I took them in to the house. They seemed very affected by what they saw. I just left them to it: they must have spent a good couple of hours talking to Joseph and Mary, then they left, in a blaze of colour and the sparkle of precious stones in the sunlight, happily making their way out of Bethlehem. They said they were going back to Babylon, of all places! - not a place that is very popular with our people I can tell you!

Now, here's a strange thing. Joseph rose very early this morning and told us that he had been instructed to take Mary and their boy Jesus to Egypt! I've **no** idea who told him to do that.....perhaps it was those strangers? but Joseph didn't mention anything last night. It was all very strange and he seemed to be in a frightful hurry: they were gone before midday!

Well, it finally looks like life is going to settle back to normal again... I wonder if we will ever hear anything more from that part of our family??

Lorraine



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

