

**Halesworth
and
Bramfield
URC**



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

Blessings, Alan

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

".....and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell" (Song of Solomon 2;13)

Dear Friends,

Gazing out on the late-March garden I reflect that by the time you read this 'letter' most of the profusion of early Spring flowers will be just a memory. The herbs, shrubs and trees will have already started the process of producing fruit and seeds.

Many of the teachings of Jesus are concerned with fruitfulness – or the lack of it. We remember the irregular yield of wheat in the parable of the Sower, fields that are "ripe already to harvest" and the unfruitful fig tree that was given one last chance (Luke 13;6-9)! Jesus told His disciples "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that does not bear fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit He prunes" (John 15;1-2). They were 'the branches'. As Jesus' disciples we, too, are His 'branches' and are subject to the same treatment..

Careful pruning of the vines opens up the foliage allowing sunlight, water, sugar and minerals to reach the grapes. This allows them to ripen, and air circulation reduces humidity so reducing the risk of disease. So, too, the Father prunes us, the Son's branches, to allow us to receive His blessings which enable us to bear mature and healthy fruit. But we have to participate in His pruning through the prayerful examination of our lives and a willingness to let God cut away those things in us which hinder our healthy spiritual development.

St. Paul's list of the of the "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal 5; 22-23) includes love, kindness and gentleness. These are key components of compassion: a deep and real concern for the well-being of those around us and even for those who are not personally known to us. To show such compassion is a salient feature of our Christian witness, bringing "light" and "salt" (Matt 5; 13-16) to people's largely secular existence. It can make our Church gatherings spaces of caring, security and refreshment for those seeking spiritual meaning in their lives. In Jesus' name, pray that this will always be true of us!

With Christian love to you all,

Chris





Those I am aware of needing prayer -
Moirra Cook, Doug Mizon, Lorraine and Alan Smedley, Kathryn and Paul Bones.

Please continue to keep Anne, Tony, Anthony, Stephen, Wendy, Ruth, Zach, Abigail, Ellen, Alice in your prayers.
Also Samual and Lillian

We publish '*special*' birthdays see page 10 (those ending with a 0 or 5). But on this occasion I wish to mention -
Alan Dunser March 6th 84
Joan Wilby March 27th 84

In Memory of Sheila Dunce 1949 - 2026

Sheila and I started 2nd Halesworth Brownies at the URC in 1984. She continued serving as a leader up until her passing at the end of January. Sheila helped at The Ark Toddler Group and with cooking and serving the meals at Messy Church as well as helping with craft at the Church's Holiday Clubs. She had a quiet faith and was a loyal servant and friend. She is greatly missed.
Alison Nichols

...I can still remember the anguish and fear that we were feeling. My wife and I were not part of "The Twelve", but we were close with them all and after that dreadful Friday, when all our hopes died, we decided to stay in Jerusalem for a while. We meant to serve his poor mother and to support each other in our loss. On the third day after his death, my wife and I felt that there was nothing more we could do, so we decided to return to Emmaus and try to rebuild our lives. As we were collecting our things together, we heard that some of the women had been to the tomb and had returned with the story that Jesus' body wasn't there! This was very unsettling and there was much "coming and going", with Peter and John confirming that the tomb was indeed empty and Mary saying that she had actually seen Jesus alive! We almost changed our minds about leaving, however, we suspected these developments were attempts by the Temple authorities to trap Jesus' followers, so we left as planned.

We were confused, disappointed and frightened, as well as being angry with God. Our minds teemed with questions, which we expressed as we walked along. Why did God forsake Jesus? How could He allow such a wicked thing to happen to him? And what about the things Jesus promised? We had been truly convinced that he was a prophet. Some of our members were of the opinion that he was more than a mere man, that he was (in fact) The Son of the Most-High God! This was not easy to understand, even though the things Jesus had done were far beyond anything we could explain. We had seen amazing healings and totally changed lives. We had experienced his knowledge of things that no-one could account for and the stilling of a Galilean storm, in the manner of a father admonishing a naughty child. We continued to walk along, asking question after question, neither of us either expecting an answer, or even listening to the other's questions. It seemed that we just needed to speak out our exasperation, in a never-ending stream. In this way, we miserably travelled the road to our home in Emmaus.

After some time, a young man came walking from the direction of Jerusalem. He fell into step with us and asked what we were discussing.

My wife stopped in her track and dissolved into fits of bitter sobs. I embraced her, both to comfort her and to hide my own tears, which I could not control. From deep within our embrace of shared misery, I (angrily) asked the stranger where he had been for the previous few days? Surely no-one in Jerusalem could have been unaware of Jesus' crucifixion? I think that my anger spilled out in my question, but the young man didn't seem to notice. He replied with a question: "Why are you surprised by the events of this Passover? Don't you remember what God said to the serpent in the Garden of Eden, that although satan would 'bruise the heel' of the woman's offspring, that very offspring would 'crush satan's head.'"

He continued by reminding us of God's promise to Abraham, that all the nations of the world would be blessed by his descendent. God had said this at a time when Abraham had no children at all (with no likelihood of this ever changing as both Abraham and his wife were too old to conceive a child.) Nevertheless, God had enabled Sarah to become pregnant in her old age and Abraham's descendants were now, certainly, too numerous to number. The young stranger continued, quoting scripture after scripture from Moses and the prophets. These writings all speak of God's Anointed One, who would come to rescue his people. The young man asked, "**What on earth do you think the Passover is all about?**" He said that our scriptures spoke both of the victory of the Messiah, as well as the death he would suffer. His death would be the complete and final settlement for our unpaid debts to God's righteousness. He quoted Isaiah's detailed description of "The Suffering Servant" and reminded us of David's psalm that begins: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" explaining to us how this psalm clearly describes a man being crucified. We remembered with sharp grief, that Jesus had cried out this psalm in his own agony, on that cross. As the stranger talked, it was as though doors were being opened in our heads. Our hearts were burning with excitement. The questions we had been asking were not only answered, but the whole landscape of our history and scripture was opening up before us.

We suddenly realized that it was getting dark and we were back at our home in Emmaus. The young man started to bid us farewell, but we urged him to stay with us until the morrow. My wife quickly laid out

some bread and wine.

It was then; when he blessed the bread and gave it to us, I caught sight of the scars on his wrists. With sudden realisation we both looked at him, incredulously recognizing the very man we were grieving for! Immediately he vanished from our sight. We sat there, shocked and amazed, with our hearts still on fire. I don't think I can explain to you how I felt. We had walked and talked with Jesus without recognizing him! But we remembered all our questions being answered and understanding bubbling up inside us. We were very different people from the hopeless wretches we had been a few hours earlier. Although there was no explaining it, the difference was undeniable. Even though it was now dark, we simply HAD to return to the brethren in Jerusalem and tell them.

When we arrived there, they were also "buzzing" with excitement. Jesus had been amongst them also! Oh! Forgive me brother, even now my heart is beating fast at the memory of it all for, at that very moment, Jesus was again standing among us! There were some there this time, who thought that this might be an apparition, a ghost, so Jesus asked for some fish and (grinning broadly) ate it in front of the "doubters" That's just what Jesus is like, always supportive and willing to help people understand. And, as he imparted further revelations, it was like a veil was being lifted from our eyes.

Of course, my friend, you already know that after 6 weeks, Jesus returned to the Father in Heaven...but a little later, at the Feast of Weeks, there was yet another day of unimaginable beginnings! Let me tell you about it!.....

Lorraine



MAY

Sunday 3rd 11.00 am Gathered Worship Peter Wagg

Friday 8th 9.45 a.m. Prayer Meeting in the Church followed by Coffee Morning

Sunday 10th 11.00 a.m. Gathered Worship
Michael Homfray Cooper

3.00 pm BRAMFIELD CHAPEL

Sunday 17th 11.00 a.m. Gathered Worship Elizabeth

Wednesday 20th 7.00 p.m. CHURCH A G M

Please make every effort to make the AGM

MAY

Friday 22nd 9.45 a.m. Prayer Meeting in the Church followed by Coffee Morning

Sunday 24th 11.00 a.m. Gathered Worship Paul Potts

Friday 29th 9.45 a.m. Prayer Meeting in the Church followed by Coffee Morning

Sunday 31st 11.00 a.m. Gathered Worship Judy Morton



SPECIAL BIRTHDAYS IN MAY

1st Wendy Pointer 45
 20th Eileen McAllister 90

happy
 birthday



CHURCH FAMILY LUNCH

*To celebrate with Eileen
 her 90th birthday
 On Saturday 16th May
 At 12.30 for 1.00 pm
 In the back hall.*



SPECIAL DATES at HURC

Halesworth United Reformed Church

Come and
 join us for:



Suggested donation £1 Per Person

Tuesdays 3:30pm - 5pm

May 5th & 9th

Book with Elizabeth - familyhurc@gmail.com



5th, 12th & 19th
 (half term 25th-27th)



HURC Too
 Every Sunday
 17th All Age Service



16th 3.00-8.30p.m.
 HURC Stall at Parish Meeting
 in the Town Park



April Family and Youth News

April has been a jam-packed month full of celebrations and holidays. During our Sunday Family Services, we enjoyed a great celebration during Easter Sunday for Jesus had risen. We played games with chocolate Easter eggs attempting to eat it with a knife and fork. As well as having a little egg hunt using the upstairs room. The children have been enjoying the opportunity to explore the other areas of the church that we are able to use. Knowing Jesus has risen it was time to look at when he showed himself again to others. We hid Lego pieces in the upstairs room for the children to find and then we counted them to find we had 153 pieces of Lego. This created the opportunity to share the passage of Jesus appearing to his disciples and how they had only caught fish when he appeared, catching 153 fish. We looked at when Jesus appeared on the road to Emmaus, this passage helps us to share with the children that even when it doesn't always feel like Jesus is with us (as we can not feel him) he is always walking beside us. The two men hadn't even noticed Jesus was the one walking with them till right near the end of their journey. Life can feel like that sometimes but holding onto our faith and having hope we know Jesus walks beside us every day.

With how the Easter Holidays fell during April we have only held one Messy Church where we looked at when Jesus appeared to his disciples in a room that had all the doors and windows locked. We discussed how scared and alone the disciples felt when they thought Jesus had left them, to how they felt once Jesus appeared to them. They then knew that even though Jesus couldn't stay with them, they were never going to be alone again. He is always with them just like he is with us, we talked about how we can build our relationships with Jesus. Whether that be through prayer, worship songs, coming to church, reading the bible, and talking about him to others. We would still love anyone willing to come along to have these deeper discussions with our youth group to help support and grow their faith, please do get in contact if you would like to come help one Messy Church.

During the Easter Holidays we held an Easter Craft event offering refreshments, easter games and easter themed craft. It was lovely to catch up with some of our families during the holidays as well as

welcome those who have not yet been to one of our church events and share with them all that our church has to offer.

Toddlers have been enjoying making foot prints using different animals and dinosaurs in salt dough. This is to represent how Jesus walks with all different people, you haven't got to be the best in your class, the nicest dressed, smartest or most popular. Jesus loves us all for who we are and is with us every step we take.

Spring Harvest, well what can I say? Another fantastic week attending, being submerged in worship and hearing some brilliant people preach the gospel. The children had a brilliant time all enjoying their groups that they attended and spending time with other Christians. The older ones really enjoyed going to the evening worship, hearing worship songs played by a live band. Praising Jesus through movement with lots of others can really grip their feeling of faith. They also had lots of fun having the freedom to go late night swimming, being the older ones out of the group of children who attended gave them the opportunity to have independence and freedom from us parents to go to their session and catch up with the friends they had made from the previous years. It was so lovely to have a new family join us this year who had never attended a Spring Harvest. All of them had a great time and the two children got stuck into the group sessions enjoying all that was to offer them. We thank you all for your generosity in the offering to help our families in easing the stress of the financial side of attending Spring Harvest. Anyone considering attending next year, booking has already begun in order to help spread the cost. So please do to get in touch if you have been thinking about going and I can share with you the brochure and talk more about how to go about booking.

I am continuing the preparation for our stall at the Annual Parish Meeting in the Town Park on the 16th May. If anyone would like to help by coming along to man the stall or to bring some input into what we could have available, this would be greatly appreciated, please do get in touch with me. This is a great opportunity to reach out to our community and do Gods work by spreading his word.

Elizabeth



Volunteers

Coffee Mornings (Fridays)

Other Duties Greeting/Prayers etc

Open the Book Team and organiser

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

