



Alde Sandlings Benefice

Aldeburgh, St Peter & St Paul's Parish Church,
Aldringham, St Andrew's Parish Church,
Friston, St Mary's Parish Church
Knodishall, St Lawrence's Parish Church

Rector: The Revd Sarah du Boulay

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The Revd Johanna Mabey

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Sunday 8th December Second Sunday of Advent

Services in The Alde Sandlings Benefice this Sunday

| | | | |
|------------|---------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Aldeburgh | 10.30am | Holy Communion | Revd Nichola Winter |
| Aldringham | 11.00am | Service of the Word | Led by Elder David Gordon |
| Friston | 10.00am | Service of the Word | Led by Elder Marie Szpak |
| Knodishall | 9.30am | Holy Communion | Revd Mary Brown |

A Message from Our Rector Rev'd Sarah du Boulay

Dear friends,

Happy Advent everybody! You'll be unsurprised to hear that my Christmas tree(s) went up at the weekend, so that I can fully enjoy them and the joy of the other decorations for as long as possible.

Because for me, this season is all about joy. About the joy of the gift of Jesus. The joy of spending time with family and friends. The joy of giving and the joy of receiving. The joy of the love of the Father who loves us so much more than we can ever begin to imagine. The joy that so many people across the world are focussed (whether consciously or subconsciously) on the person of Jesus.

Of course, we all live in different circumstances, with different struggles and blessings and joy may be in short supply for some of us, but my prayer this Christmas is that the wonder of the nativity shines through, and the promise of the return of Jesus means something to us all, and that we are all reminded of the love and faithfulness of God.

With prayers,

Sarah

The Alde Sandlings Saturday Gratitude

A recap for all the positive news and love that God has shown us in the benefice this week. We have much to be grateful for.

- Aldeburgh** For The Alpha course which has just finished, welcoming people questioning a new faith and those who wanted a 'top up' on a faith they have had for a while. What a joy it was!
- Aldringham** For the Advent Carol service on Sunday evening when we welcomed over 90 people to worship and begin our Advent journey together.
- Friston** The star going up on the church tower, which will remain there after Christmas as a reminder of the Church as a physical Beacon of Hope in the village.
- Knodishall** The people who clean, decorate, maintain and love the church building, and those who look after the church yard so well.
- Pilgrims** Give thanks for the 'People of Peace' known to us in our day to day lives. Those who are persistent in prayer and expectant in their actions, to bring about God's Kingdom. Those who walk the extra mile on their Pilgrim Journey.

Collect

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power
and come among us,
and with great might succour us;
that whereas, through our sins and wickedness
we are grievously hindered
in running the race that is set before us,
your bountiful grace and mercy
may speedily help and deliver us;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honour and glory, now and for ever.

First Reading

Malachi 3.1-4

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Second Reading

Philippians 1.3-11

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that on the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Gospel Reading

Luke 3.1-6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

Sermon by Revd Sarah du Boulay at Aldringham 1st December

So, finally, it's advent Sunday – the first day of the period leading up to Christmas Day itself. So to celebrate, I'd like to share with you a poem about Epiphany – the occasion when we celebrate the arrival of the magi or the kings, or the wise men. Bear with me! Advent is a time of realisation and recognition of Christ, and that's the whole package. This particular poem is actually a sonnet, and is written by the Christian poet, Malcolm Guite.

It might have been just someone else's story,
Some chosen people get a special king.
We leave them to their own peculiar glory,
We don't belong, it doesn't mean a thing.
But when these three arrive they bring us with them,
Gentiles like us, their wisdom might be ours;
A steady step that finds an inner rhythm,
A pilgrim's eye that sees beyond the stars.
They did not know his name but still they sought him,
They came from elsewhere but still they found;
In temples they found those who sold and bought him,
But in the filthy stable, hallowed ground.
Their courage gives our questing hearts a voice
To seek, to find, to worship, to rejoice.

I wanted to share this poem for two reasons. One is the first two lines, which say;

It might have been just someone else's story,
Some chosen people get a special king.

It might have been someone else's story. The story of Christmas, and the life of Jesus, and the events of the crucifixion and resurrection might have been something which was relevant to other people. People we never knew. But it's not. This is our story. This story relates to us, beginning thousands and thousands of years ago, and through the generations, through the centuries, our story, yours and mine, and will be the story of our descendants. We are the chosen people who have received the special king.

The second reason is the two lines:

A steady step that finds an inner rhythm,
A pilgrim's eye that sees beyond the stars.

Remember, the season of Advent is about journeying towards Christmas day – travelling together towards remembering the birth of the Christ-child. Towards the second coming of Jesus. A steady step that finds an inner rhythm. A pilgrim's eye that sees beyond the stars.

It is important that we see the whole story. Not just the events before us, but that we understand the whole meaning and the history behind it. One of the reasons that we remember the patriarchs on the first Sunday of Advent is because it is so important that we recognise that we are all part of the same family of worship. The same lineage. The same family of God. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the patriarchs of the Bible, were near the beginning of that lineage. The name 'Abraham' means literally 'great father'. This was ironic because he was, of course, childless for the majority of his lifetime. God made a covenant with Abraham – that if Abraham gave his life to God, then God would honour him by making him the father of the nations. It was because of his trust in God that Abraham became the leader first of a great family, and then the ancestor of all the Jewish tribes. And God comes to us with that same invitation – if you give me your life, I will give you my life – eternal life. Salvation. Life in all its fullness. This line of course then passes through King David and Jesus – the prophecy given in our Old Testament reading today. We may (or may not) be blood descendants of Abraham, but we are part of the same family of faith.

And it all ties in together; the stories of the Old Testament are the stories of personal faith being deeply connected with collective faith. The faith of Abraham, David, Isaac, Jacob, the individuals deeply connected with the collective faith of the Jewish nation, and now, some 4,000 years later, connected to us. Right here, in this church on the coast of Suffolk. The story of the patriarchs shows us that it is better to journey together in faith, than to wander alone. We are part of the family of God. We are better together. We journey, together. We worship, together. We pray, together. We love, together.

As a team, a group, as a lineage, we are stronger than individually. God has given us all we need, we are pilgrims together on this journey. You will have noticed that so many of St Paul's epistles speak eloquently (and at great length) about praying for other Christians. About supporting others on their faith journey. About longing to meet with one another and to share the good news of the Gospel, so that everybody will come to know Jesus.

We are those chosen people. The special king has been born as a human child, and he is coming again. We don't know when, we don't know where. Our Gospel reading today speaks of that second coming, and says:

'Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, 35 like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. 36 Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.'

That is what we do during Advent. We keep watch. We keep alert. And we do it together. We are those pilgrims, with the steady step, journeying towards what has been promised us. Just like the magi we will remember during Epiphany. Just like the 12 tribes of Judea. Just like the disciples. Just like millions of people before and after us. That great cloud of witnesses.

It might have been just someone else's story,
Some chosen people get a special king.

Post Communion

Father in heaven,
who sent your Son to redeem the world
and will send him again to be our judge:
give us grace so to imitate him in the humility and purity of his first coming
that, when he comes again,
we may be ready to greet him
with joyful love and firm faith;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

† Church of England and Diocese Online Worship †

There are many online services you can view from the Church of England and our cathedral. Here are some links below.

Church of England website

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/church-online/weekly-online-services>

Church of England Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/thechurchofengland/>

Church of England YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLecK8GovYoaYzIgyOEIKZg>

St Edmundsbury Cathedral Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/stedscathedral>

† Morning Prayer across the Benefice †

Revd Sarah is bringing the benefice together in prayer each morning from 9-9.30am. People are very welcome to join, no regular commitment required, just pop along when you wish.

Monday – Aldeburgh & **Friston

Tuesday – **Knodishall

Wednesday – Aldeburgh

Thursday – Aldringham

Friday – Aldeburgh

** Weather permitting, we are prayer walking around Friston and Knodishall. Please speak to Revd Sarah and Revd Mary for more info.

£££ Ways to donate to our churches within the £££

Alde Sandlings Benefice

Your donations REALLY mean so much to us. If you would like to donate this Christmas, please click on the link below.

No matter how small your donation is, it helps us keep our doors open, support our ministry and mission, and to help preserve our church buildings. THANK YOU SO MUCH

Just click on the link to support any of our churches -

<https://www.aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk/ways-to-donate-to-the-churches-within-the-alde-sandlings-benefice/>

ALDE SANDLINGS BENEFICE CHRISTINGLE CELEBRATION at ALDEBURGH CHURCH



Come share
the light this
Christingle

**The
Children's
Society**

SATURDAY 7TH DECEMBER AT 4.00pm

A SERVICE FOR ALL OF THE FAMILY

Please do check our website for news and updates www.aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk



Growing Leaders 2025 Aldeburgh

Session Dates

| | |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Thur 28 Nov 24 | 7-8pm Information Evening on Zoom |
| Thur 9 Jan | 6-9pm with a meal |
| Thur 23 Jan | 7-9pm |
| Thur 27 Feb | 7-9pm |
| Thur 27 March | 7-9pm |
| Thur 24 April | 7-9pm |
| Thur 15 May | 6-9pm with a meal |
| Thur 19 June | 7-9pm |
| Thur 17 July | 7-9pm |
| Thur 11 Sept | 7-9pm |
| Thur 16 Oct | 7-9pm |
| Thur 13 Nov | 7-9pm |
| Thur 11 Dec | 7-9pm |

BOOK NOW > email Rev. Sarah du Boulay revd.sarah@btinternet.com



Growing Leaders 2025

"At St Thomas' everyone who has attended Growing Leaders has come to know their vocation better and as a result the church has become a more vibrant place. They have grown in confidence, in love of God, of neighbour and themselves."
Reverend Rachel Revely

"A challenging and transformational course which has led to me knowing whose I am, understanding my identity as a child of God, choosing to remain in him and offering my ordinary life for him to use as he guides... being obedient to my call to encourage others."

"For me, Growing Leaders has been enlightening, encouraging and empowering. I was challenged in a positive way: my faith has deepened & my self-confidence has increased."

BOOK NOW > email Rev. Sarah du Boulay revd.sarah@btinternet.com

The Alde Sandlings, Dates for your Diary

- Prayer Warriors' Group – Last Tuesdays of the month, starting 24th September 6-7pm in Aldeburgh Church – All welcome
 - Benefice Bible Studies Group I – Sunday 6th October 3-4.30pm, then every first Sunday of the month at The Rectory, Friston
 - Benefice Christingle Service – Aldeburgh Church, Saturday 7th December at 4pm
 - Benefice Service at Aldringham on Sunday 29th December at 11.00am.
 - Growing Leaders 2025 – See notice for dates. More info to follow
- AND..... All Christmas Dates – See Christmas Poster below in this newsletter.



**CHRISTMAS DATES AT THE
CHURCHES OF
THE ALDE SANDLINGS BENEFICE**

ALDEBURGH PARISH CHURCH

| | | |
|------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|
| Saturday 7 th December | 4.00pm | Benefice Christingle Service |
| Saturday 14 th December | 10.00am | Christmas Messy Church |
| Sunday 22 nd December | 6.00pm | Christmas Carol Service |
| Christmas Eve | 3.30pm | Crib Service |
| | 11.30pm | First Communion of Christmas |
| Christmas Day | 10.30am | Christmas Holy Communion Service |

ALDRINGHAM PARISH CHURCH

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|
| Sunday 1 st December | 6.00pm | Advent Carol Service by Candlelight |
| Wednesday 11 th | 6.00pm | Carols on the Green |
| Sunday 15 th December | 11.00am | Christmas Carol Service |
| Christmas Eve | 11.30pm | First Communion of Christmas |
| Christmas Day | 11.00am | Christmas Morning Family Service |

FRISTON PARISH CHURCH

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|
| Sunday 22 nd December | 6.00pm | Christmas Carol Service |
| Christmas Day | 10.00am | Christmas Holy Communion Service |

KNODISHALL PARISH CHURCH

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--------|---|
| Sunday 15 th December | 6.00pm | Village Carol Service at Knodishall Village Hall |
| Christmas Day | 9.30am | Christmas Holy Communion Service |

WE WISH YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY AND BLESSED CHRISTMAS
Please visit Alde Sandlings Website -
www.aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk for all other service times



Alde Sandlings Benefice

Prayer Groups

There will be two **benefice monthly Bible Studies Group**. One group will have its first session on Sunday 6th October, and will run every first Sunday of the month from 3-4.30pm.

This will be hosted by Revd Mary at the Friston Rectory.

Prayer Warriors Group

We will meet monthly on the last Tuesday of the month from 6-7pm in Aldeburgh Church, beginning on 24th September.

You are all most welcome. If you would like to join either, please contact Revd Mary to be added to the list.

† Home Visits †

Not everyone can get to church as they were once able to, due to an illness or reduced mobility. We fully understand that this can be incredibly isolating for some. If you, or you know of someone that would like a home visit from one of our Elders, please do let us know.

Or if you would like home communion, please do let a member of clergy know. Please contact them directly or email

admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk and we will do our utmost to arrange a visit.

📣 Food Banks at the East of England Co-op 📣

Foodbanks provide a valuable service to those in need in our communities. The Aldeburgh Co-op and Solar in Leiston are doing a grand job in collecting food donations, which are collected regularly and distributed. So please look out for the various collection baskets.

<https://www.eastofengland.coop/community/foodpoverty/foodbank-support>

† Pilgrims Together on Wednesdays on Zoom †

The worship starts at 6.30pm (Zoom call opens from 6.10pm) and the call is then left open after the worship time for people to catch up. People are welcome to email pilgrimstogether473@gmail.com to receive a copy, be added to our mailing list, or for the Zoom link.

This Saturday 21st December Encounter, Pilgrims' Faith Cafe @ The Outside Inn, Parrot Pub 9.30 - 10.30

Come and join us for coffee, tea & croissants; chance to explore questions about faith, chance to reflect, to listen & share thoughts. All are welcome.

Pilgrim Christmas Pop-Up @ Aldeburgh Prom by Moot Hall - Saturday 21st December 3pm Come and join us to sing carols and celebrate with all who gather and pass by.

Pilgrims @ Thorpeness - Sunday 22nd December 4pm

Carols round the Tree by the Meare. Come and join us to sing carols, hear the Christmas story and celebrate together.

Sunday 12th January starting late afternoon (time to be confirmed) @ Ogilvie Pavilion

New Pilgrims face to face gathering. Cafe style: praise, prayer, exploring the Bible together, refreshment. Opportunity to be together. More details to follow in the new year.



Alde Sandlings NEW Service Times from January 5th

We have new service times for Aldeburgh and Friston Churches. Aldeburgh will be 11.00am EVERY Sunday from the 5th January
Friston will be 9.30am EVERY Sunday from the 5th January
Aldringham and Knodishall services remain at the same times

**ALDEBURGH PARISH CHURCH
ST PETER & ST PAUL'S**

Invites you to **CHRISTMAS**



**COME AND LISTEN TO THE CHRISTMAS STORY
THERE WILL ALSO BE LOTS OF CHRISTMAS
CRAFT MAKING & MUCH MORE FUN
FOR ALL AGES**

**at the CHURCH HALL
SATURDAY 14th DECEMBER
10am till 12 Noon**

ALL WELCOME

**NO CHARGE. JUST PLEASE LET US KNOW YOU
ARE COMING, SO WE HAVE ENOUGH MATERIALS.**

**Please email Fran Smith at
admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk**

**Sunday 15th December
Third Sunday of Advent**

Safeguarding at The Alde Sandlings Benefice

The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in church activities is the responsibility of everyone who participates in the life of the Church. If you are concerned that someone you know is at risk of, or is being abused, or presents a risk to others, please seek advice from a Safeguarding Adviser or if necessary, report the matter to the Local Authority Social Care Services or the Police without delay.

The Alde Sandlings Safeguarding Officer: Mrs Fran Smith – admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk