



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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Tel: 01728 582213

The Revd Nichola Winter

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Curate: The Revd Mary Brown

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The Revd Johanna Mabey

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Sunday 22nd December Fourth Sunday of Advent

Services in The Alde Sandlings Benefice this Sunday

Aldeburgh	10.30am	Holy Communion	Revd Mary Brown
	6.00pm	Carol Service	Revd Sarah & Revd Mary
Aldringham	11.00am	Morning Prayer	Led by Elder Sheila Brechin
Friston	6.00pm	Carol Service	Revd Nichola Winter
Knodishall	9.30am	Holy Communion	Revd Sarah du Boulay

A Message from our Rector, Rev'd Sarah du Boulay

Dear friends,

We're nearly there! Nearly at the time when we celebrate the incarnation of God himself as a tiny little helpless baby, given to us to teach us more about Him, and finally to suffer and die, for us, before being resurrected, again for us. It's mind blowing and humbling and wonderful beyond our wildest dreams.

This advent has been particularly fantastic in our benefice, with many extra services and events when we gather to prepare with our church congregations and wider communities to celebrate the birth of Jesus, and we still have some wonderful services to go.

Next year we continue looking forward and I'm pleased to let you know that as part of her ongoing training with us, Mary will be taking the lead at St Andrews, allowing her to learn exactly what running a parish is like, whilst still under the protection of curacy. Don't panic – the other three parishes will still see plenty of her both on Sundays and during the week, and I am still Rector for all four churches and will be around as much as ever, but this is a wonderful opportunity both for Mary, and for St Andrews. Please do pray for Mary as she enters this next phase of her training.

Please also do take a moment to read the second attachment with this newsletter, which spells out exactly what is happening with Sunday services next year. As I said – we're looking forward and discerning together what God is calling us to in the Alde Sandlings benefice. Exciting times indeed!

And may I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I'm looking forward to celebrating with you all during this season.

With prayers and every blessing,

Sarah

The Alde Sandlings Saturday Gratitude

In the Alde Sandlings benefice, this week we are grateful for:

All of YOU wonderful people! For people who live, work, play and exist here in our community. For those who attend church and those who don't. For those who work so hard to keep our churches running and those who haven't quite worked out what God is calling them to yet. For those who climb stepladders and stand in front of congregations and those who support us with faithful prayer. For the young and the old and everybody in between. For those who know God and those who have heard of Him but got no further.

For **all of YOU**. I am eternally grateful to be living alongside you and ministering with you all.

Here's to a wonderful, Spirit-filled 2025!

Pilgrims

Pilgrims are giving thanks for the many ways the true message of Christmas is celebrated across our locality touching hearts and transforming our communities, through gatherings in and out of church buildings, High Street trails, gatherings at the pub and care home. We wish everyone a Christmas filled with much peace and wonder.



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 1st 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

Collect

God our redeemer,
who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary
to be the mother of your Son:
grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour,
so we may be ready to greet him
when he comes again as our judge;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

First Reading

Micah 5.2-5a

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labour has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace. If the Assyrians come into our land and tread upon our soil, we will raise against them seven shepherds and eight installed as rulers.

Second Reading

Hebrews 10.5-10

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, 'Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt-offerings and sin-offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, "See, God, I have come to do your will, O God" (in the scroll of the book it is written of me).' When he said above, 'You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt-offerings and sin-offerings' (these are offered according to the law), then he added, 'See, I have come to do your will.' He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Gospel Reading

Luke 1.39-45 46-55

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.' And Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

Sermon by Revd Sarah du Boulay at Friston 15th December

Some sermons are easy to write in plenty of time before a service, others take a little longer. This one was written after the Strictly Come Dancing final last night! I knew what I needed to say, but didn't know how to say it, and God Bless Strictly – it gave me what I needed.

It was a beautiful final, and I spent a lot of time in tears. It was joyful, it was supportive, it was positive, it was emotional, it was brilliant telly! I really enjoyed all four finalists, and fully engaged with their journeys from week one to the final, but my favourite was always Chris McCausland. For those of you who don't know, Chris McCausland is a comedian and former children's television presenter. He regularly appears on radio and television, from silly gameshows to Have I Got News For You. He is also blind.

He was never the best dancer on the series. He had big problems with his posture because he has spent so much of his life hunched over, in his 'safe'

space, so his technique was not as good as the other finalists. He was also on a backfoot from the start because his professional partner Dianne couldn't show him anything. He had never seen the show and had no idea what the different types of dance were or looked like, or what he was expected to recreate. All Dianne could do was describe the dance and steps, and physically place his body in the positions required of him.

And he battled on. He took the notes from the judges and he made it to the final – I'm not going to tell you who won just in case you haven't seen it yet!

However, several times during the final, Chris was called an inspiration and a role model, and I think this is true. He was incredible and his partner – his teacher and professional dance partner was incredible. What really made me emotional though was the relationship between them and the faith she had in him. Dianne clearly believed in Chris and made the impossible possible. She advocated for him, she prepared him, she supported him, she showed him off and she helped him to grow throughout the series.

In this week in which we remember and celebrate John the Baptist, it occurred to me that we are called to be like Dianne. We are called to prepare the way for Jesus. We are called to have great faith, utter belief. Called to explain, to teach, to be joyful, to have a close relationship, to journey. To take the words of St Paul – to boast in Jesus Christ.

This doesn't always look glamorous and polished and television ready with perfect make up and clever dance routines. Much, much more time is spent in the blood, sweat and tears or the rehearsal room. In our Gospel reading, John starts by saying 'you brood of vipers!' and goes on to tell people exactly what they are doing wrong and how they can improve. He tells them clearly what is expected of them and what is needed for when they come face to face with God himself. He very clearly points the way to Jesus (if you will allow me, like every good professional dance partner, allowing the celebrity to be the main event). And he continually proclaims the good news to the people.

Even after 20 years, Strictly still becomes a national pastime. If you don't watch it yourself, I'll bet you know somebody who does. And people to watch it love it and talk about it and get excited about it and vote for their favourite and cry when something beautiful happens... Millions of people tune in every week to watch. In the 2023 statistics, fewer than 1 million people attend church every week.

Can you imagine if we all spoke about God with the same emotion and passion as we speak about Strictly? Can you imagine if the CofE weekly attendance increased by nearly 10 times to make it level with Strictly figures?

I have taken a few liberties with my comparisons this week, I realise, but this is what I take every year from remembering John the Baptist. Reading about him makes me dream a little bigger. Makes me imagine more clearly what it will be like when God's kingdom is fully realised. Although my tree went up weeks ago, this is the week when I always start to feel 'Christmassy'; when it really comes home to me what we are preparing for in Advent.

From a place of love and joy and belief, to faithfully prepare the way for Christ, our Creator and our Redeemer. To speak and live out the Good News in an emotional, impassioned and excited way. To share this with as many people as possible. To live as though we believe this with all our hearts and to be 100% 'in'. And for the whole year, not just at Christmas-time, to 'Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.'

Post Communion

Heavenly Father,
who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary
to be the mother of the promised saviour:
fill us your servants with your grace,
that in all things we may embrace your holy will
and with her rejoice in your salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

WE WISH YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS

*Jesus, Saviour, son of Mary,
you know us and love us,
you share our lives
and hear our prayer.
Glory to you for ever.
Amen.*

**The Alde Sandlings benefice newsletter returns on the
4th January 2025!**

Wednesday 25th December

Christmas Day

Aldeburgh	10.30am	Family Holy Communion	Revd Sarah du Boulay
Aldringham	11.00am	Family Holy Communion	Very Revd Christopher Lewis
Friston	10.00am	Family Holy Communion	Revd Nichola Winter
Knodishall	9.30am	Family Holy Communion	Revd Mary Brown

Collect

Eternal God, who made this most holy night
to shine with the brightness of your one true light:
bring us, who have known the revelation of that light on earth,
to see the radiance of your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

First Reading

Isaiah 52.7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.' Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the Lord to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Second Reading

Hebrews 1.1-4 5-12

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, 'You are my Son; today I have begotten you'? Or again, 'I will be his

Father, and he will be my Son'? And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, 'Let all God's angels worship him.' Of the angels he says, 'He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire.' But of the Son he says, 'Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever, and the righteous sceptre is the sceptre of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.' And, 'In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end.'

Gospel Reading

John 1.1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Post Communion

God our Father,
in this night you have made known to us again
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him
until the day dawns and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.
To him be glory both now and for ever.

Sunday 29th December
1st Sunday of Christmas

Aldringham 11.00am Benefice Holy Communion
Led by Revd Sarah du Boulay

Collect

Almighty God,
who wonderfully created us in your own image
and yet more wonderfully restored us
through your Son Jesus Christ:
grant that, as he came to share in our humanity,
so we may share the life of his divinity;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

First Reading

1 Samuel 2.18-20, 26

Samuel was ministering before the Lord, a boy wearing a linen ephod. His mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year, when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, 'May the Lord repay you with children by this woman for the gift that she made to the Lord'; and then they would return to their home. Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favour with the Lord and with the people.

Second Readings

Colossians 3.12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Gospel Reading

Luke 2.41-end

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travellers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour.

Post communion

Heavenly Father,
whose blessed Son shared at Nazareth the life of an earthly home:
help your Church to live as one family,
united in love and obedience,
and bring us all at last to our home in heaven;
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>

**£££ 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/>

† 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.

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 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 in this newsletter.



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

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 links.

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



**PLEASE!!
NOTE**

Next Sunday - 5th January, Epiphany