



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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Sunday 5th January Epiphany

Services in The Alde Sandlings Benefice this Sunday

Aldeburgh	8.00am	Holy Communion	Prebendary Derek Johnson
	11.00am	Family Holy Communion	Revd Sarah du Boulay
Aldringham	11.00am	Holy Communion	Revd Mary Brown
Friston	9.30am	Holy Communion with baptism	Revd Sarah du Boulay
Knodishall	9.30am	Morning Prayer	Revd Mary Brown

A Prayer for the New Year

Eternal God,
as we enter into a new year,
calm and quieten our souls;
keep us humble and full of wonder
and trusting as we live in your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

BRITTEN'S NEW YEAR CAROL (second edition) 15 May 1934
Synopsis by Canon John Giles

Levy Dew - This curious and lovely carol seems to bring together Jewish and medieval Catholic imagery. A New Year Carol is one of Britten's 'Friday Afternoons' songs written for children. The text is a traditional folk song and was included by Walter de la Mare in his anthology of poems for children, *Tom Tiddler's Ground* (1931).

Here are the words:

Here we bring new water from the well so clear,
For to worship God with, this happy New Year.
Sing levy dew, sing levy dew, the water and the wine;
The seven bright gold wires and the bugles that do shine.
Sing reign of Fair Maid, with gold upon her toe,
Open you the West Door, and turn the Old Year go.
Sing levy dew . . .
Sing reign of Fair Maid, with gold upon her chin,
Open you the East Door and let the New Year in.
Sing levy dew . . .

Water from the well so clear - Possible reference to the laver or washing bowl set up between the altar of the tabernacle and the people in which Aaron and sons and fellow priests would wash before services (Exodus 39.30 foll)

Levy dew – Levez Dieu: the Elevation of the Host in the Catholic Mass

Bright gold wires – The golden wires of the harps in heaven (Catholic/Christian) and/or The golden threads in the holy garments for worship in the Tabernacle (Exodus 39.3) Jewish.

The Bugles – The Trumpets used in the worship of the Tabernacle (Jewish) as also in Heaven (in Christian imagery).

Seven - A number of perfection - The Seven days of creation etc. The Jewish Seven-branched Candlestick. The Seven Golden Candlesticks representing the Churches in Rev.1.20. The light of the sun will be seven-fold on the day when the Lord binds up the injuries of his people (Isaiah 30.26) Many other instances. .

The Fair Maid – Probably Mary, here referred to anonymously to protect Jewish sensitivities (see below).

Gold upon her Toe (where oil of healing and cleansing might be put. Leviticus 14.14).

Gold upon her chin -No discoverable biblical reference here so presumably chosen simply to rhyme with "Let the New Year in"

How did this come about? Perhaps these words were passed down through some Jewish family and their children who had been forcibly baptised as Catholics before the Reformation, having to appear outwardly Christian in church, but inwardly in family life retaining older Jewish faith and customs.

More information here: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Levy-Dew>

Collect

O God, who by the leading of a star
manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth:
mercifully grant that we,
who know you now by faith,
may at last behold your glory face to face;
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 60.1-6

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

Second Reading

Ephesians 3.1-12

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given to me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow-heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given to me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God

who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 2.1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel."' Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

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

**Sermon by Revd Sarah du Boulay
at Aldringham for the benefice service, 29th December**

The Sunday before Advent this year, when we were celebrating Mary the mother of Christ, I preached about how maybe the really audacious thing Mary did wasn't the saying 'yes' to God. Maybe the really audacious thing she did was believing that she had found favour. That she was chosen. That she was beloved.

I know that the part of my faith I struggle with the most is believing that God loves me completely and utterly. That he created me to be me and he loves me just as I am. Now, I could reel off a long list of wonderful things about each and every one of you without taking a breath, but ask me something loveable about myself and I would genuinely struggle. I do not have much self confidence. I know that most of the time I cover it well, but I always have struggled internally and I suspect I always will.

I also suspect I'm not the only person here who would feel the same. In a society which encourages us to be perfect (whatever that means), any failure – from having wonky teeth to the wrong colour hair, to buying the wrong phone, having the wrong friends, being single, making mistakes, hurting someone else, saying the wrong thing, acting against the masses.... There are so many ways in which we can be considered 'imperfect', and society is all too ready to shout at us about that.

How many times do we react from anger and disappointment. How many times are we ready to believe the worst in someone else – reacting in a way which suggests our immediate thought is that they acted out of spite, or greed, or some other bad thing, when in fact, they might just have made a genuine mistake? If we ask ourselves honestly, do we always react out of kindness and compassion and humility? Do we always remember that other people are human and not perfect, and have feelings which are as valid as our own? Are our motives as pure as we would have others be?

I don't know much about how society functioned 2,000 years ago on a personal level, but I would guess that human nature hasn't changed that much. Ok, we now have social media and better communication and advertising and other things powerful enough to spread the message faster and stronger, but I imagine that people still didn't always react out of love. That they made others feel inadequate. That they made mistakes. That they had faults and beauty standards and sinned and put pressure on other people.

Added to that the pressure we put on ourselves, and I think we see Mary's reaction in a whole new light. Especially given that she knew what society would make of her new situation, should they find out. And even through all of this, Mary believed and trusted that God loved her and she had found favour with the Lord.

The word 'love' appears between 442 and 759 times in the Bible (depending on which translation you are using, and remembering that Hebrew and Greek both have more words which mean 'love' than the English language). In 4 short books, Jesus mentions love around 70 times, both in giving commandments himself and in explain the old scriptures. And remember – love isn't all soft and fluffy and nice. Sometimes love is to drag a sheep out of a hedge backwards by its feet in order to save its life. Love can be challenging and dirty and not always particularly pleasant. But it has its own motive, its own feel, and is different from any other motive or reaction we might have, in it's very essence.

In our Gospel reading today, we can only imagine exactly what Jesus was teaching about in the temple, but his understanding was great, and he both asked and answered many questions. His focus, right from the beginning of his life was on God the Father, and his purpose was to help other people see and understand this, and to have the same focus in life. Like Mary, he knew absolutely that he was loved beyond all measure, and he spent his earthly life communicating this to people around him, and encouraging them to realise that they too were and are loved.

This knowledge does change our very being. It has to – it's such a BIG, HUGE thing, and if our core is changed, then our behaviour must also change.

So my encouragement to us all is that 2025 be the Year of Love. Love for ourselves. Recognition and acceptance of God's love for us. And loving of other people.

I want to read you our passages from Colossians again:

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. ¹³ 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. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ 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.

Amen.

Post Communion

Lord God, the bright splendour whom the nations seek:
may we who with the wise men have been drawn by your light
discern the glory of your presence in your Son,
the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Next Sunday - 12th January, First Sunday of Epiphany

† 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, 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

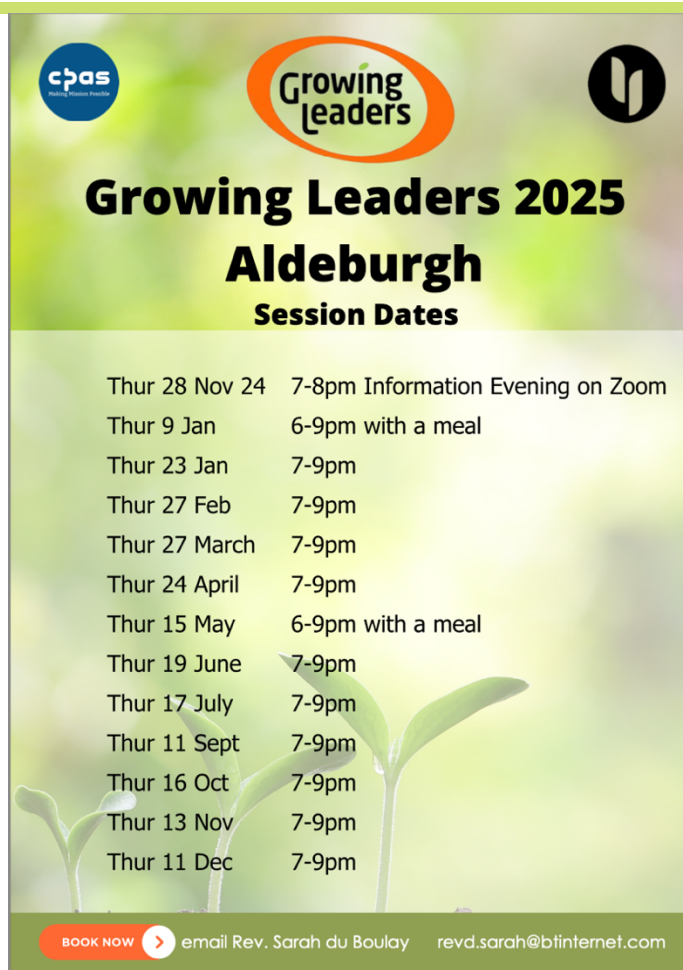
Thursday – Aldringham

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
- Growing Leaders 2025 – See notice for dates. More info to follow



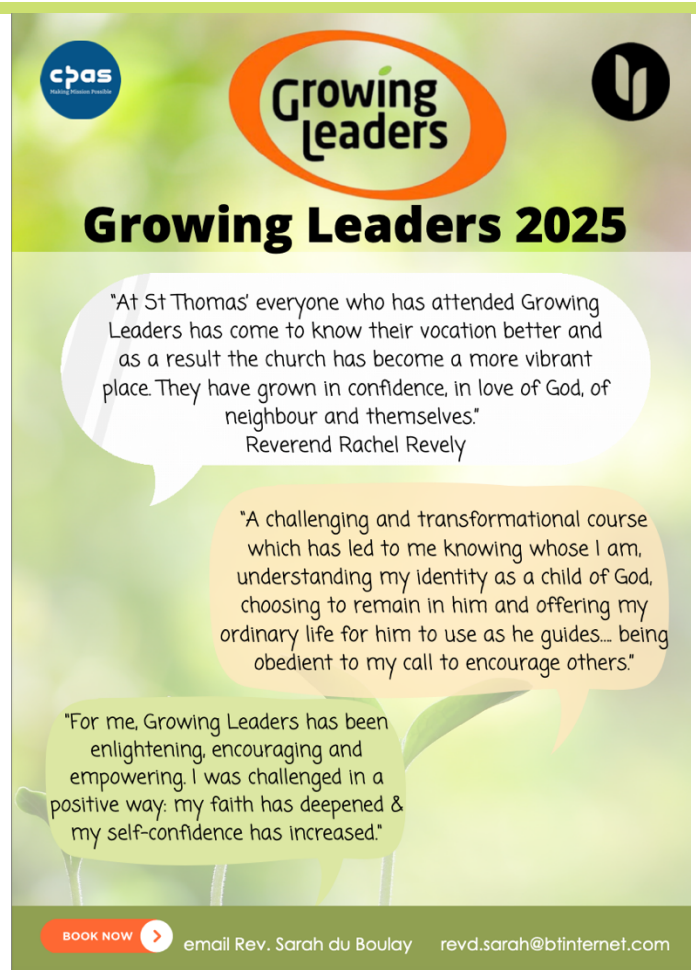
CPAS Making Positive People

Growing Leaders

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



CPAS Making Positive People

Growing Leaders

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 link.

Sunday 12th January 4pm @ Ogilvie Pavilion

New Pilgrims face to face gathering. Cafe style: praise, prayer, exploring the Bible together, refreshment. Opportunity to be together.