



## 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

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### Services in The Alde Sandlings Benefice – Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May

Aldeburgh	8am 11am	Holy Communion CW2 Holy Communion	Prebendary Derek Johnson Revd Mary Brown
Aldringham	11am	Service of the Word	Revd Sarah du Boulay
Friston	9.30am	Service of the Word	Led by Elder Marie Szpak
Knodishall	9.30am	Service of the Word	Led by Elder Ros Macallister

Dear Friends,

Happy Ascension Day! Today is the day that the church celebrates Jesus' ascension into heaven, 40 days after Easter and 10 days before Pentecost. We will hear the account of the ascension from Acts as one of the readings on Sunday. In this reading Jesus tells his disciples that they will be his witnesses to the ends of the earth. Ten days later the Holy Spirit descended on them at Pentecost, and they found themselves telling people about Jesus in a multitude of languages they didn't speak. That day about 3000 people joined the disciples in believing the message of Jesus Christ.

This is the tenth year of the Thy Kingdom Come, a prayer initiative started by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, which runs from Ascension to Pentecost. Thy Kingdom Come encourages each of us to pray for five friends every day between today and Sunday week, praying that they would come to know Jesus Christ, and praying for our own confidence and boldness in being Jesus' witnesses. As a Benefice, let's each choose five people known to us and pray for them by name each day over the next 10 days. There are many resources and ideas to help you pray on this website: <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/thy-kingdom-come-2026>

With love and prayers,  
Mary

## Readings for Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2026

### Collect

O God the King of glory,  
you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ  
with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven:  
we beseech you, leave us not comfortless,  
but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us  
and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### Ezekiel 36:24-28

<sup>24</sup>I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. <sup>25</sup>I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. <sup>26</sup>A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup>I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. <sup>28</sup>Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

### Acts 1:6-14

6 So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' <sup>7</sup>He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' <sup>9</sup>When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup>While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. <sup>11</sup>They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. <sup>13</sup>When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. <sup>14</sup>All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

### John 17:1-11

17 After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, <sup>2</sup>since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. <sup>3</sup>And

this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. <sup>4</sup>I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup>So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

<sup>6</sup> 'I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. <sup>7</sup>Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; <sup>8</sup>for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. <sup>9</sup>I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. <sup>10</sup>All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. <sup>11</sup>And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

### † 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>

### † Home Visits †

Not everyone can get to church as they were once able to, due to an illness 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

[aldesandlingsbenefice@outlook.com](mailto:aldesandlingsbenefice@outlook.com) and we will do our utmost to arrange a visit.

**Sermon by Revd Mandy Tucker at Aldeburgh Parish Church**  
**10<sup>th</sup> May 2026 – Sixth Sunday of Easter**

John 14:15–21 — The Advocate Who Stands With Us

Most of us know what it feels like to need someone on our side.  
Someone who speaks up when we can't find the words.  
Someone who stands beside us when we feel overwhelmed.  
Someone who says, "You're not facing this alone."

In our world we call that advocacy.

It might be a friend who goes with you to a difficult appointment.

A colleague who quietly says, "Leave this with me."

A family member who steps in when you're too tired to fight your corner.

Perhaps you have had to attend court for something, I'm not asking what! But if you have you may have had a solicitor or barrister with you, talking on your behalf.

When we went to court to adopt our son, we were supported by someone from the family court who helped to present the case to the judge. They were there to help, to be our advocate. To help us navigate a situation where we didn't know how it all worked.

We are dealing with a challenging situation around our sons school at the moment, and I am having to advocate for him. If you have children you will probably know what that feels like. We need to advocate for our children because they cannot necessarily do it for themselves.

Advocacy is about presence, protection, and speaking truth on behalf of someone who needs support. An advocate is someone who helps.

And in today's Gospel, Jesus says that this is exactly what God gives us in the Holy Spirit.

John chapter 14 takes place on the night before Jesus dies. The disciples are anxious, confused, and frightened. Everything familiar is about to fall apart. And into that fear Jesus speaks a promise:

He says

"I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever."

The word Jesus uses is Paraclete. This means someone who is called alongside someone else. Some translations show this word as 'helper', but the word advocate captures this more accurately, I think. Someone who comes alongside as a support.

Jesus know he is about to be betrayed, turned over to the authorities and to die. He knows the plan, and knows how broken the disciples are going to feel. So he is saying: "You won't be left to cope on your own.

The Spirit will stand with you, speak for you, guide you, strengthen you."

I'm not sure the disciples would have understood what Jesus meant. There were so many important things said that evening. If they had thought about it, they might have expected another physical person. Or they might not have really taken in what Jesus was saying.

You see this is before Jesus dies, and we know from earlier in the chapter that the reality hasn't dawned on the disciples yet. Of course, we know the story, and we also know what happened when the Holy Spirit did come at Pentecost! But that's for another day!

Coming back to the reading, when we look closely at what is said we can see something interesting here. Jesus calls the Spirit 'another Advocate'.

When I was preparing for today that made me stop and think, 'another advocate' must mean there was one before or already.

So who was the first advocate?

Now we all know that if you ask a question in church quite often the answer is Jesus, and that is the case here.

the first Advocate was... Jesus himself.

Think of how Jesus lived:

- He defended the outcast.
- He spoke truth to power.
- He lifted up the weary.
- He restored dignity to those who had lost it.
- He stood between the vulnerable and those who would harm them.

He came alongside people who needed him, and supported them.

So in some ways I think Jesus is saying:

"You've seen what advocacy looks like in me.

Now the Spirit will continue that work in you and through you."

The Spirit is not a vague feeling or a distant force. The Spirit is God's active, present help.

Jesus goes further when he talks about the Spirit. He says

"He lives with you and will be in you." Here Jesus wasn't just talking about his disciples, he was also talking about us. The Holy Spirit lives with us and is in us.

This is astonishing. When we think of our earthly advocates or helpers, they are people who come alongside us. But The Holy Spirit isn't just beside us, the Holy Spirit is within us.

What's interesting is what Jesus goes on to say. He calls the Spirit, the Spirit of Truth and says the world cannot accept the Spirit because it doesn't know him. But you, the disciples, us as Christians, do know him.

Here Jesus is setting his disciples, which includes us, apart from the world. As Christians accepting Jesus into our lives is inviting the Spirit to live within us.

Jesus death and resurrection gave us the gift of forgiveness for our sins, eternal life.

And to help us Jesus promises the Holy Spirit will be within us.

But it means we are called to live in this world but not be of this world. As Christians with the Spirit guiding us we are to live a life that follows Jesus, that lives out his commands which might not always be popular with everyone else!

But we have the Spirit to help.

What does that actually mean in practice? What does having the spirit in us mean?

If we allow ourselves to be guided by the spirit,

- When we don't know what to pray, the Spirit prays in us.
- When we feel powerless, the Spirit strengthens us.
- When we are unsure what is right, the Spirit guides us.
- When we feel alone, the Spirit reminds us that we are held in God's hands and His love.

The Spirit is God's advocacy planted inside our very being. That's amazing.

But remember the Spirit doesn't only work in us. The Spirit also works through us.

Jesus says, "If you love me, keep my commandments."

And his commandment, which he gives just a few verses before our passage today, is simple: "Love one another as I have loved you."

Ok so it sounds simple, but it can also be quite demanding. Love others, even if they are different to ourselves?

Our challenge is to think about it this way. God sends his Holy Spirit to be with us. That is part of his love. If the Spirit is our Advocate, our helper, someone who comes alongside us, then we are called to become an advocate for others.

To stand beside the lonely.

To speak up for the unheard.

To comfort the grieving.

To challenge injustice.

To offer hope where hope has worn thin.

The Spirit equips ordinary people, people like us, to do extraordinary acts of love. To follow Jesus' commandment

Imagine what a church looks like when it truly lives this out.

A place where no one suffers alone.

Where truth is spoken gently but boldly.

Where the vulnerable are protected.

Where forgiveness is offered freely.  
Where people find courage they didn't know they had.  
Where love is not just a feeling but a practice.

That is the work of the Advocate. That is the life Jesus promises.  
That is the church we are called to be.

I like to give us all a challenge for the week, so this week let's focus on the Holy Spirit as an advocate, a helper.

Ask the Holy Spirit to be your Advocate and ask the Holy Spirit to make you an advocate for someone else.

You could do this by praying a simple prayer each morning this week,

"Holy Spirit, stand with me today.  
Show me who needs me to stand with them."

Holy Spirit, stand with me today.  
Show me who needs me to stand with them.

And then pay attention. Listen for the guidance of the spirit. Look for God's presence and his guiding hand.

It might be a neighbour who needs a listening ear.

A friend who needs encouragement.

Someone in church who needs a quiet word of kindness.

A situation where truth needs to be spoken with grace.

Let the Spirit guide you.  
Let the Spirit strengthen you.  
Let the Spirit work through you.

Because Jesus ascended to heaven, but he has not left us alone.  
The Advocate is with us and through us, the Advocate is at work in the world.  
Amen.

**St Andrew's Church Flower Festival**  
***Spectacular Floral Tributes to the Saints***



Join us at St Andrew's Church, Aldringham, for a beautiful display of floral arrangements inspired by the saints.

**Dates & Times**

**Saturday 13 June** — 10am to 4pm

**Sunday 14 June** — 12pm to 4pm

**Admission is free**

Refreshments available throughout the event.

Everyone is warmly welcome.

**Can You Help? Jumble Sale Volunteers Needed**

The Fairfield Centre is seeking volunteers to support a Jumble Sale in aid of Aldeburgh Primary School on Saturday 13th June.

Help is needed from 11.00am to 1.00pm with serving teas, coffees, and refreshments, as well as setting out stalls. Volunteers are also welcome to assist with setting up in the morning and tidying away afterwards.

In addition, help is needed on Friday 12th June between 11.00am and 2.00pm to receive donations at the Fairfield Centre.

If you are able to help in any way, please contact Elly on 07761 152206 or via email at [info@thefairfieldcentre.co.uk](mailto:info@thefairfieldcentre.co.uk).

Donations of clothes, toys, books, and cakes would be greatly appreciated.

**£££ 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/>

**Always wanted to sing?**

**Why not join Friston Community Choir!**

Held fortnightly on Wednesdays 6.00pm – 7.30pm

Friston Village Hall, Church Path, Friston IP17 1PU

£5 per session. For more info email

Briony Sones: [fristonvillage@gmail.com](mailto:fristonvillage@gmail.com)

**ALL WELCOME**

**Friston Goes Green**

Saturday 16 May 2026

10.00am – 3.00pm

Friston Village Green

The annual Plant and Cake Sale returns to Friston Village Green, with all proceeds in support of St Elizabeth Hospice.

Browse a wonderful selection of home-grown plants, vegetables and herbs, alongside homemade cakes and preserves. Whether you are looking for something for the garden or simply want to stop by for a chat and a browse, everyone is warmly welcome.

This is a donation-based event. Cash and card payments are both accepted.



**Save the Children**  
100 YEARS

**Lunchtime Classical Concert Series**

Aldeburgh Parish Church

Friday 22 May 2026, 12 noon

The highly successful Lunchtime Classics Concert Series in aid of Save the Children continues in 2026 with the welcome return of:

Masumi Ogura – Clarinet

Helen Stanley – Viola

Nadia Lasserson – Piano.

This special summer concert will include works by Johannes Brahms, Paul Hindemith and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, including Mozart's Kegelstatt Trio, K. 498.

Admission is free, with a retiring collection in support of Save the Children.

**All are very welcome.**

### **Food Banks at the East of England Co-op**

Foodbanks provide a valuable service to those in need in our communities. The Aldeburgh & Leiston Co-op supermarkets 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>

### **The Alde Sandlings, Dates for your Diary**

- Morning Prayer throughout The Alde Sandlings Benefice weekly at 9am.  
Aldeburgh – Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.  
Aldringham – Every Thursday.  
Friston – Every Monday.  
Knodishall – Every Tuesday.
- 14<sup>th</sup> May - 7.30pm Deanery Ascension Day Service at St Margaret's Church, Leiston
- 17<sup>th</sup> May - Aldringham APCM (Midday)  
6.30pm Aldeburgh Churches United Service at St Peter & St Paul's Church, Aldeburgh
- 24<sup>th</sup> May - Pentecost – a celebration of the birthday of the church! Service details and events to follow – Save The Date!
- 4<sup>th</sup> June - 7.30pm Archdeacon's Visitation Service at St John's Church, Saxmundham

### **† Pilgrims Together †**

#### **Pilgrims Online Wednesdays**

Wednesday Gathering to Worship, Reflect and Pray

6.30pm (open from 6.10) - Zoom link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/376110700?pwd=Q0Q3TUNya08zVGNoUkl2aUc5a0hV>

Zz09

**All are welcome to any of the Pilgrim's events.**

### **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-  
[safeguarding.aldesandlings@outlook.com](mailto:safeguarding.aldesandlings@outlook.com)

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