



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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Sunday 11th June First Sunday after Trinity

Services in The Alde Sandlings Benefice this Sunday

Aldeburgh	10.30am	Aldeburgh Festival Service
Aldringham	11.00am	Service of the Word
Knodishall	9.30am	Holy Communion

A Message from Revd Sarah du Boulay

Dear Friends,

The Aldeburgh Festival is well underway, and we are looking forward to welcoming regular congregation members, people from our community, and festival goers this Sunday for the annual Festival Service, at the Church of St Peter and St Paul, Aldeburgh. We will also be welcoming the Dean of St Edmundsbury Cathedral, the Very Reverend Joe Hawes to preach. Do come to worship with us if you are able. Joe is a magnificent preacher, and the music (from Aldeburgh Voices, and our own choir) will be absolutely beautiful. What a treat for us all.

In other news, we are all looking forward to our summer programmes. Friston's is already in full swing, and Aldringham will be producing fliers and posters very soon. For Knodishall and Aldeburgh, it's business as usual, but do look out for some exciting additions, coming your way soon!

With prayers,

Sarah

Collect

O God, the strength of all those who put their trust in you,
mercifully accept our prayers
and, because through the weakness of our mortal nature
we can do no good thing without you,
grant us the help of your grace,
that in the keeping of your commandments
we may please you both in will and deed;
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

Genesis 12.1-9

Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother's son Lot, and all the possessions that they had gathered, and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran; and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan. When they had come to the land of Canaan, Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. Then the Lord appeared to Abram, and said, 'To your offspring I will give this land.' So he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. From there he moved on to the hill country on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the Lord and invoked the name of the Lord. And Abram journeyed on by stages towards the Negeb.

Second Reading

Romans 4.13-end

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be

guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations')—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become 'the father of many nations', according to what was said, 'So numerous shall your descendants be.' He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Therefore his faith 'was reckoned to him as righteousness.' Now the words, 'it was reckoned to him', were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 9.9-13, 18-26

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, 'Follow me.' And he got up and followed him. And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax-collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax-collectors and sinners?' But when he heard this, he said, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice." For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.' While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader of the synagogue came in and knelt before him, saying, 'My daughter has just died; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.' And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, for she said to herself, 'If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well.' Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, 'Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.' And instantly the woman was made well. When Jesus came to the leader's house and saw the flute-players and the crowd making a commotion, he said, 'Go away; for the girl is not dead but sleeping.' And they laughed at him. But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. And the report of this spread throughout that district.

Sermon by The Very Revd Christopher Lewis, Trinity Sunday, 4th June, at Aldringham

Apparently, some clergy make great efforts to avoid preaching on Trinity Sunday! They could tell the story of Augustine of Hippo, walking on the beach and finding a boy who was digging a hole in the sand. Augustine asked ... 'why the hole?' ... and the boy said that he was going to put the sea into it. Augustine laughed. The boy asked St Augustine what HE was up to, to which he replied, 'writing a book on the Trinity'. The boy's turn to laugh... infinite task: the mystery of the Trinity.

How do we start? Today of all days, we can start not with ourselves but with God. God the Creator being there through what may seem millions of years to us but seem as but nothing to God the Father. Today we stop treating things (including maybe our religion) as some kind of therapy for our benefit. Today of all days, we praise God and are taken out of ourselves. Attend to God – not to the church or to the clergy or finance or politics, although God relates to all of these. Come back David Jenkins, sometime bishop of Durham, all is forgiven! He spoke out in a controversial way but got us talking of God. So I suppose does Richard Dawkins the arch-critic, although he needs to improve his act.

Who is this God? The Trinity helps us, not just as a great theological exploration, but also in our experience of God. Put another way...how do you explore God and learn new things of his nature?

I wonder where you start. I could say 'Hands up those for God the Father'. Some of us start with a sense of God as creator of the world in all its wonder. God, glorious and great; mysterious and very deep; beyond and above us, within and beside us. St Augustine wrote of God in his 'Confessions'. I quote: 'You, my God, are supreme... You are the most hidden from us and yet the most present amongst us, the most beautiful and yet the most strong, ever enduring and yet we cannot comprehend you. You are unchangeable and yet you change all things. You are never new, never old, and yet all things have new life from you.'

For Augustine, God to be worshipped and adored. Approach him kneeling, which is wonderful when you do it. The longing for God the Father is deep within us; indeed it is there, waiting to be discovered in all of us.

Yet we need the other persons of the Trinity. Why? Because this creator God may seem remote, or his presence has been overlaid and concealed by all kinds of unhelpful experiences (perhaps indeed by experience of fathers) – the Creator God may know us intimately but how do we get to know him intimately?

In St John's Gospel, Philip says to Jesus 'Lord, show us the Father' and Jesus says, 'Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.' (John 14:8) In other words, God is more than a creator; he is as he is in Jesus. God loves and cares as Jesus did; he also goads and challenges. He is not a mere 'spiritual' God, but the one who includes the marginalized as well as overturning the tables in the temple. And God is the kind of God who suffers with and for us: opening wide his arms for us and knowing what it is to live a human life.

Some of us are Father people; others are Jesus people. The immensely attractive person of Jesus; that is where many start: 'what a friend we have in Jesus'. Yet the temptation with Jesus is to walk with him as friend and brother, excluding the great sweep and majesty of the Creator of all things, excluding too all those people who are not (or have not had the chance to be) Jesus people.

There is controversy here among Christians and I ask you to open your hymn books at that wonderful hymn 262 (Common Praise: 'O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder') and look at verse 3. I love that hymn, but I cannot sing that verse. Why, because it contains what seems to me an absurdity, namely the Father sending the Son to die so that Jesus pays a kind of ransom to the Father: a ransom which enables us to have our sins forgiven. No! I believe that Jesus came to live life on earth as it should be lived: with love, forgiveness, and prayer. He was killed by the religious and political forces of that time because his way of life, giving priority to the suffering of people, was a threat to them and to their teaching. He did not do some kind of deal with the Father; Jesus was and is one with his Father and sits on God's right hand.

The Trinity is an exploration in life and also in theology: in trying to give the best account of Christian belief and of accumulated experience of God. And that is especially seen in what might be described as the third person of the Trinity: the Holy Spirit. Through some of Christian history, the Church has been what might be called Binitarian not Trinitarian: a Father and a Son and maybe a little of the Virgin Mary and of wisdom, but not much of the Holy Spirit. Yet, quite rightly, there is a contemporary emphasis, in our culture and in many others, on experience - experience that has helped Christianity to discover more of the Spirit as a true part of the Trinity.

If you took a world survey, the Holy Spirit is where many do start: world Christianity is a strange and wonderful thing, blossoming in all kinds of unexpected directions, some of them pretty wild. Yet there we can learn more of God: God present and active in our lives now, so that life is fresh and immediate. God giving new life and hope and leading us into the truth, experienced together and individually.

I heard two stories - both of the birth of Down's Syndrome babies. One was in a family which was initially deeply shocked, but then gradually - through the love and prayers of people round them - came to see their new child positively, as a lovely child and as someone who had much to bring to the life of everyone around him...the Holy Spirit brought understanding and hope in a place which could have been full of despair. And the contrasting story is also of a Down's Syndrome baby, where the birth was seen by parents and others as a curse, and where nobody was conscious of the Spirit's power to break through in new understanding and new life.

God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit: not seen mechanically or as some kind of diagram. No – seen from the way we come to know God more deeply, prompted and given shape by the lived Christian tradition. And so a question: which person of the Trinity do I know least well? Perhaps I am most attracted to the Father (a Father person), loving God on mountain tops, on my knees, in the world's wonders. That is a part, but I need to go further to discover whole new worlds in God - in the person of Jesus and in life in the Spirit.

I may be the one drawn to God the Son. Following him in practice, determined to do good in the world, to support his church, to bear the burdens of others. God as he is in Jesus - his life, his teaching. But then again, my knowledge of God needs expanding – so that I attend to the wonder of God, and also to his present activity in the Spirit: God as he is known and felt now - God active; his people alive with enthusiasm at knowing him. New life for all in the Spirit.

So the question is worth repeating, this time in a more positive form: Looking at my life, which person of the Trinity do I need to know better? Kallistos Ware, an Orthodox priest in both senses of orthodox, went into a restaurant and the waitress, wanting to show him to a table, asked him 'Are you one person?' I guess that he answered that he was! When it comes to God, Christians through the ages have had this deep God-given sense of how God reveals himself to us: through the wonders of creation, in the person of Jesus and by the prompting of the Spirit. The Trinity is a gift to lead us deeper into the life of God and his world. For myself, my answer to my question is that I need to know the Spirit more deeply. I hope each of you will answer that question.

Post Communion

Eternal Father, we thank you for nourishing us with these heavenly gifts:

may our communion strengthen us in faith,
build us up in hope, and make us grow in love;
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Cash and digital Collections at Services at Aldeburgh

From Sunday 11th June, we will be passing round the collection bags during the offertory hymn at each 10.30am service. We stopped using the bags during the COVID pandemic and started using the digital card readers which has worked well for those who bring debit cards to the services. However, we do find that visitors and others prefer to give to a cash collection, especially at big services. The card readers at the back of the church will still be available for those wishing to use them, so this will be an “either/or” situation. We will trial this arrangement until the end of August and then review the situation and listen to feedback.

Many thanks, Aldeburgh PCC

Come and meet our new Curate

As Revd Sarah said last week, Mary will be joining us on the 2nd July. We thought it would be a nice idea to welcome Mary in gently with a bring and share lunch on the 2nd July around 12.30pm. Do check your notice boards in church to add your name, and, if you would like to bring a plate of food as a contribution towards the lunch.

† Baptism Family Holy Communion Service †

On 25th June, at the Aldeburgh 10.30am service, we will be inviting the families that have been baptised at Aldeburgh to come along and reaffirm their baptism vows. Anyone else that wishes to reaffirm their vows are also most welcome.

† 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/UCLeck8GovYoaYzlgyOEIKZg>

St Edmundsbury Cathedral Facebook Page

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

Next Sunday, 18th June – Second Sunday after Trinity



Friston Open Gardens

Sunday 18th June

11.30am - 5.30pm

**Tickets £5 admit
to all gardens
(last sold 4. 15pm)**

**Please park on
Village Green**

**Village Hall open
for light lunches
and refreshments**

In aid of Church Funds

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>

£££ Ways to donate to our churches within the £££ Alde Sandlings Benefice

Your donations REALLY mean so much to us at this challenging time. 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 †

Rev'd 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 – Friston

Tuesday - Knodishall

Wednesday - Aldringham

Daily at Aldeburgh, Monday to Saturday

† Fairfield Centre Prayers †

The united churches hold prayers at the Fairfield Centre at Aldeburgh, every third Sunday of the month at 6pm. **All very welcome**

Weekly Benefice Newsletter

If you would like something added to the weekly newsletter that is relevant to the Benefice, please do let Claire know and we will do our best to include it the following week.

All requests by 4pm on Thursday please

† 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 or be added to our mailing list.

The weekly Wednesday Zoom link is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/376110700?pwd=Q0Q3TUNya08zVGNoUkl2aUc5a0hVZz09>

Meeting ID: 376 110 700 - Passcode: 028069

Saturday 17th June Community Good News Faith Cafe @ The Outside Inn, Parrot Pub 9.30 - 10.30

A time for conversation, a hot drink and a croissant. A time to share and offer our thoughts and stories. Acts of kindness and good news within the Outside Inn and taken out into the outside world.

Saturday 1st July Community Breakfast and Local Ramble starting 9.30 @ The Parrot

As before, a delicious breakfast bap and coffee / tea combo for £6.50 is on offer at the Parrot, before we head out to explore local paths. We will be exploring paths around North Warren. Come just for breakfast and a catch-up with folk, come for just the ramble or come and enjoy both. (You don't need to book in advance, you can decide on the morning.) To help with timing, if coming only to ramble then we generally head from The Parrot around 10.30am.

Please do invite friends along.