



## **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

Priest in charge: The Revd Sarah du Boulay

Email: [revd.sarah@btinternet.com](mailto:revd.sarah@btinternet.com)

Tel: 01728 582213

The Revd Nichola Winter

Email: [njwinter@whd.co.uk](mailto:njwinter@whd.co.uk)

Curate: The Revd Mary Brown

Email: [revd@mary-brown.co.uk](mailto:revd@mary-brown.co.uk)

Tel: 01728 467454

The Revd Johanna Mabey

Email: [rev.johannamabey@gmail.com](mailto:rev.johannamabey@gmail.com)

## **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February Second Sunday before Lent**

### **Services in The Alde Sandlings Benefice this Sunday**

Aldeburgh	8.00am	Holy Communion
	10.30am	Family Service
Aldringham	11.00am	Holy Communion
	5.30pm	Evening Prayer
Friston	10.00am	Holy Communion
Knodishall	9.30am	Morning Prayer

### **A message from Revd Sarah du Boulay**

Dear Friends,

We're having a busy couple of weeks as a benefice. On Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> February, we will be having our Friston Church Open Morning; Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> sees my installation as Rector, to be held at Aldringham Church; and Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> is Ash Wednesday, the benefice service being held at Knodishall this year. Lent courses start the week after. Added to this our weekly Saturday coffee mornings at Aldeburgh, plus usual weekly activities and services, and we can see some of the really exciting things that God is doing in our little corner of Suffolk.

You'll be pleased to know that my new year resolutions are going well – I am off the couch in Couch to 5K – and am really enjoying reading again (thanks for all the book loans and recommendations). Although I am well aware that 2024 is already proving difficult for some people, I do hope that the presence of God is tangible in your lives, and that everybody knows they are loved and supported.

Do contact me if there is anything we can do – for you or your neighbours.

With prayers,

Sarah

### **Revd Sarah's Benefice Licensing Service**

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February, 3pm- St, Andrew's, Aldringham**

Archdeacon Rich will be leading this service to license Revd Sarah as our Rector of The Alde Sandlings Benefice. The service will be held at Aldringham church at 3pm on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February.

We are hoping for a big crowd to support Sarah, and there will be a marquee outside in the churchyard. Everybody is most welcome. There will also be an opportunity to meet the Archdeacon and to enjoy some convivial après-licensing refreshments in the church and in the marquee.

It will be wonderful to have a packed church for this significant event.

So, see you there!

### **Collect**

Almighty God,  
you have created the heavens and the earth  
and made us in your own image:  
teach us to discern your  
hand in all your works and  
your likeness in all your children;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who with you and the  
Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things,  
now and for ever.

## **First Reading**

### **Proverbs 8.1, 22-31**

Does not wisdom call, and does not understanding raise her voice?

The Lord created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of long ago. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth- when he had not yet made earth and fields, or the world's first bits of soil. When he established the heavens, I was there, when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him, like a master worker; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the human race.

## **Second Reading**

### **Colossians 1.15-20**

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers-all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

## **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.

### **Sermon by Revd Nichola Winter - Fourth Sunday of Epiphany/Candlemas at Knodishall 28<sup>th</sup> January**

As a child, I recall thinking it very odd that the local church where I went to Sunday school always kept its Christmas tree in place until February. The claim that the church continued to celebrate Christmas long after the rest of us had removed festive decorations seemed like trying to have too much of a good thing. The outside world had long since returned to secular worries, a new school term had started and the cheerful mood of Christmas seemed to have evaporated.

But Candlemas marks the end of the Epiphany season. It falls forty days after the feast of the nativity - and was the time at which a new mother would be expected to undergo ritual purification. Candlemas has been long celebrated by Christians - records of it date back to the fourth century; and symbols relating to it have been significant in secular, agricultural and legal quarters. At Candlemas, cattle would be moved out from the meadows that were to be ploughed ready for spring sowing. In the Celtic church, St Brigid was remembered on this day - a figure linked to the blessing of wells, springs and the household hearth - a reminder of the duty of households to welcome strangers and offer hospitality. In Scotland, Candlemas used to be one of the quarter days on which rents were paid and certain contracts renegotiated. Generally it was a time of reckoning - of taking stock and re-assessing. A time of new beginnings.

One of the greatest symbols linked to Candlemas is that of light. The name comes from the tradition of the priest blessing beeswax candles that would be used in the church throughout the year. In the Armenian church, the custom was to light candles on the eve of the feast and carry them out into the darkness - a symbolic bringing of light into the void. These lights would then be taken to the homes of the faithful - a reminder of the Christ child who would become the light of those who walked in darkness.

It was this recognition of Jesus as the one who was to fulfil the promise of the prophets that forms the backbone of the story from Luke, read today. In the weeks before Christmas we lit candles on the Advent wreath, one of which represented the prophets - those figures in history who looked forward to the coming of the Messiah. On this day, as Joseph and Mary arrived at the temple with their Son, two faithful servants of God recognised Jesus as the one who would be the expected Messiah - who would bring redemption, not just for the people of Jerusalem and Israel - but for all peoples, a task that continues to be work for us today.

It may feel strange to us that, on this day, we suddenly return to a story about the infancy of Jesus. During Epiphany the gospel readings have taken us on a journey exploring the nature of Christ and how he reveals himself as the Son of God. First there was his baptism - his earthly cleansing by John, but also the alighting of the Holy Spirit and declaration that here was the beloved Son of God. Then we had the story of Nathaniel and the first disciples, followed by the wedding at Cana - a story of human celebration and festivity but with the added wonder of the first of the divine signs that would become a key factor in the ministry of Jesus. Each of these gives us a sense of how the humanity of Jesus will find a revelation that points us to God, the heavenly Father.

So it is with Simeon and Anna. At last, after years of waiting, they see in this small child the sign they have been waiting and praying for. It must have been a marvellous, wondrous moment for them - this moment of recognition, a fulfilling of the expectation and anticipation they had held for so long. And like so many eagerly awaited events, it probably didn't happen in the way they had expected. Simeon's encounter with the Holy Spirit, when he was told that he wouldn't experience death before he had seen the Messiah, probably didn't prepare him for the fact that when that revelation came it would come in the shape and person of - a young baby. That fragility, that vulnerability, that weakness - most of us have only to encounter a tiny child to be overtaken with feelings of protection, wonder and love. But recognition of a Messiah? That might be more of a challenge.

And yet, here it is. The promise fulfilled; the salvation revealed. In a baby. Simeon is not going to see the end of the story of salvation just yet. God doesn't always work in that way. His time is not our time. He will do things when his time is right - we can receive God's promises but we cannot dictate the exact way in which those promises will be fulfilled. We may have a long journey to undertake first. Even Mary, the mother of Christ, who will already have experienced so many wonderful things in

relation to this amazing child, still has a long way to go. Simeon's warning must have cast a shadow over her - 'a sword will pierce your own soul, too.' What parent does not experience the pains as well as the joys of parenthood?

But here is the child Jesus, being brought to the temple as part of the purification ritual. Not for the first time, Jesus is subject to human law. Human law that will play such a crucial part in his ministry to us as he allows himself to share our humanity. Only by being completely human and demonstrating an alignment with the world will he be able in due course to bring redemption and salvation. The wonder of God made man is that it's not a kind of quick fix - it has to be worked out in God's own time, and by God's good grace. This does not mean that we need only sit back and wait for it to happen. Far from it. What is crucial is our response to God and to this child, His Son.

This brings us to the well known words uttered by Simeon and used by us as the Gospel canticle at night prayer and also at many funeral services. We affirm our entrusting of ourselves - and the deceased - to the love and peace of God. The words of the Nunc dimittis speak of completion and fulfilment; indeed they are a song of rejoicing and an affirmation of faith. In some churches they are connected with the renewal of religious vows; they might even be described as one of the first mission statements - a recognition of the need to bring the light of Christ to all peoples. So they have become a song - a prayer - in which we entrust ourselves to God. Come Lord, into our lives, and work your way in us. We may not always understand why things are revealed to us in strange ways - a tiny babe for a Messiah; a sword that pierces the heart rather than a balm that soothes the soul, but we recognise that God sends His Son into the world and that salvation will come by Him. We offer ourselves to be used in whatever way God chooses; take our humanity, we pray, and use it as you will, that we, too, may become pointers to your salvation and witnesses to your glorious light.

### **Post Communion**

God our creator, by your gift the tree of life was set at the heart of the earthly paradise, and the bread of life at the heart of your Church: may we who have been nourished at your table on earth be transformed by the glory of the Saviour's cross and enjoy the delights of eternity; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## **The Alde Sandlings Benefice Lent Courses**

**Starting Monday 19<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February,**  
Rev'd Mary (and her cats) welcome you to Friston Rectory at 3pm  
**every Monday** in Lent

**or**

Rev'd Sarah (and her dogs) welcome you to Aldeburgh Vicarage at 7pm  
**every Wednesday** in Lent

Both groups will have the same content so just pick which one suits you to attend each week. We will be learning to Dwell in the Word (a particular spiritual way of reading scripture) and then finishing with either Evening Prayer or Compline. All materials will be provided each week, so just bring yourself. If you could give Claire an indication if you wish to attend either group, it would be appreciated (for refreshments etc). [admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk](mailto:admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk) All welcome!

**Next week we set you the  
Alde Sandlings Lent Challenge! More info to follow.**

### **Issues Receiving the Benefice Weekly Newsletter**

Some of you have informed us that you haven't been receiving the weekly newsletter. This is only applying to BT and Gmail email users so far. This is frustrating, we know, but unfortunately there isn't a great deal we can do to rectify this issue from our end, as it is how your email providers spam filters class the email, ie spam or not spam.

Please do check you spam/junk folders. You can also view the newsletter every week on the benefice website too if the actual email doesn't find its way into your mailbox.

<https://www.aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk/news/>

### **£££ 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/>

## **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**

### **† 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>

### **† Fairfield Centre Prayers - Café Church †**

Every third Sunday of the month at **4pm**.

Relaxed and informal with tea, toast, activities, chat and worship.

**All ages very welcome**

### **† 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 – Aldeburgh & Friston

Tuesday - Knodishall

Wednesday – Aldeburgh

Thursday – Aldringham

Friday – Aldeburgh



## **Aldeburgh Choir**

Do you like to sing? Come and join our church choir. Our services are every Sunday at 10.30am. We also hold special extra services at Christmas and other events in the church calendar. The choir plays an essential role to our worship. So, the more the merrier, even if you are just visiting us. Want to give it a go? Contact: [admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk](mailto:admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk) For more information.

## **† 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](mailto:pilgrimstogether473@gmail.com) to receive a copy, be added to our mailing list or for the Zoom link.

## **Saturday 17th February 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 10th February - Pilgrim Quiz**

Please email Richard if you are able to supply a round for the zoom quiz night: [pilgrimstogether473@gmail.com](mailto:pilgrimstogether473@gmail.com)

## **Saturday 24th February - Pilgrim Local History Story Telling Ceilidh. More details to follow!**

## **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>

## Confirmation Service

### **Would you like to come forward for Confirmation?**

We are planning for this service to happen on the 26<sup>th</sup> May.

Confirmation is a special church service in which a person confirms the promises that were made when they were baptised. If you were baptised at a christening when you were a child, your parents and godparents made these promises on your behalf. As a young person or adult, you may be ready to affirm these promises for yourself and commit your life to following Jesus Christ. At a confirmation service, you make these promises for yourself. Your friends and family as well as the local Christian community will be there to promise to support and pray for you. There will be some confirmation meetings giving you the opportunity to discuss your lifetime journey of faith coming up in the benefice. **If you think this would be something that you wish to explore further, please speak to a member of clergy or contact [admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk](mailto:admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk)**

## **Sponsored Tree Planting in the Aldeburgh Churchyard**

We will be planting nine trees in the Aldeburgh Closed Churchyard. These will be a mixture of English Oak, Hornbeam and Wild Cherry given to us by Bishop Martin and the Suffolk Tree Warden Network. Sponsoring one of these trees involves caring for the young tree by making sure it is regularly watered and ensuring the area around the base of the tree is kept clear until the tree is established. We will be preparing the areas for tree planting starting at 11:00am on 12 March 2024, and we will be planting the trees starting at 11:00am on 20 March 2024. If you would like to help with preparing the areas, planting trees or sponsor one of these trees in memory of someone special or as a special celebration then please get in touch with Ken Smith as soon as possible by person in church or do contact

[admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk](mailto:admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk)

**We are limited with the number of trees, so it will be on a first come first served basis.**

## Welcome Committee at Aldeburgh Church

As we all know the winter months can be very difficult with moral and general wellbeing. Sometimes you just need to get out of the house, but where can I go?

We are offering a hot drink and a warm welcome every Saturday between 10-12 noon, from 13<sup>th</sup> January to 30<sup>th</sup> March. Whether you live on your

own or are just missing better weather catch ups and a good natter with old friends and meeting new ones, do come along. People with young children are also more than welcome to come and enjoy time playing, reading, and drawing in the children's corner. Your church doors are open and welcome you to spend some time with company and a cuppa.



Can you help? We are asking for volunteers to meet and greet every Saturday from 13<sup>th</sup> January until 30<sup>th</sup> March from 10am – 12 Noon for 2hr slots. Please do sign the rota on the notice board in the church if you would like to be part of this, or contact Claire

[admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk](mailto:admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk)

## Knodishall Church Fund Raising Quiz

Fun Quiz at **Knodishall Village Hall** on the **1<sup>st</sup> March, starting promptly at 7pm.**

Supper provided but do bring your own drinks. £7 per person, max 6 per team. Meet up and enjoy a fun evening with friends, raffle, spot prizes, laughs - oh, and a few questions to answer!

All money raised goes to St Lawrence, Knodishall Church.

**Next Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> February**  
**Sunday next before Lent**



**ST MARY'S FRISTON**

**OPEN MORNING**

**SATURDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY**  
**10am – 12 Noon**

**Friston Church invites you all to come and join us for  
our open morning.**

**Have a go at bell ringing**

**Play the organ**

**Explore the Churchyard**

**Meet the Vicar and the team**

**Refreshments available too!**

**We look forward to seeing you all there**

**For news and info on all our churches within the Alde Sandlings  
Benefice please visit [www.aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk](http://www.aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk)**