



## **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 11<sup>th</sup> January First Sunday of Epiphany/ Baptism of Christ**

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

Aldeburgh	11.00am	Holy Communion	Very Revd Christopher Lewis
Aldringham	11.00am	Holy Communion	Revd Sarah du Boulay
Friston	9.30am	Holy Communion	Revd Mary Brown
Knodishall	9.30am	Holy Communion	Revd Sarah du Boulay

### **A Message from Revd Mary Brown**

Dear Friends,

This week we entered the season of Epiphany, which begins with the celebration of the wise men's visit to Jesus in Bethlehem, and ends four weeks later with Candlemas, the celebration of Jesus' presentation at the temple.

This is a season where we celebrate God's glory revealed in Jesus Christ to all people. The 'epiphany' is that of seeing who this child is, and what he has come to do for us all. From the arrival of the wise men from afar, to Simeon the prophet declaring that Jesus is 'the light of the world', this season affirms that Jesus has come to gather people from all nations, to extend the goodness of God's Kingdom to all peoples.

During this season of Epiphany let's rejoice as we remember that Jesus is the light of the whole world. I am going to choose a different people group or country each week to pray for during this season, perhaps you would join me in this.

With love and prayers,

Mary

### **Collect**

Eternal Father, who at the baptism of Jesus  
revealed him to be your Son, anointing him with the Holy Spirit:  
grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit,  
that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children;  
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 42.1-9**

Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights;  
I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He  
will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised  
reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will  
faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be crushed until he  
has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his  
teaching. Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched  
them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives  
breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: I am the  
Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and  
kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the  
nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from  
the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. I am the Lord,  
that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols. See,  
the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before  
they spring forth, I tell you of them.

## **Second Reading**

### **Acts 10.34-43**

Then Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

## **Gospel Reading**

### **Matthew 3.13-end**

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?' But Jesus answered him, 'Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfil all righteousness.' Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.'

## Sermon by Revd Mary Brown

### 4<sup>th</sup> January – Epiphany

Those of you who saw me before I put my robes on may have noticed that I am still wearing a Christmas jumper. I've also still got my tree up, which those who come to Bible Study this afternoon will get to enjoy. This is because it is still Christmas, today is the 10<sup>th</sup> day of Christmas, and the Christmas season, liturgically, continues until Tuesday, the 12<sup>th</sup> day of Christmas, and Epiphany. We are celebrating Epiphany today, a couple of days early so that we get to celebrate together in church.

*'The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined.'*

*'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.'*

Our Old Testament reading today, from Isaiah, is reminiscent of both of these readings from Christmas Day.

*'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.'*

As we continue in the Christmas season, we continue with the theme of Jesus Christ as the light come into the world, come to shine in the darkness. Jesus Christ the light that cannot be overcome even by the darkest of darknesses. And today we add the element of Jesus Christ, the light that makes us shine too, because radically, and surprisingly, Jesus tells us in John that he is the light of the world, and in Matthew that we are the light of the world.

When we walk in the light of Christ, we ourselves become lights that light up the darkness around us.

I have been looking after my Mum's dog Hope since Christmas Day. I like to take her on a little night time walk just before bed, and often the cat joins us, so we have to walk across the fields not on the pavements. Because of the waxing moon and clear skies over the last few days we have been walking at night without needing a torch, the moonlight has been enough to see by. But the moonlight is tricky, you think it's enough to see by until the next morning, when the sun rises, and you remember what it is like to see by that better light - the sunlight that

illuminates the shadows and shows you the details. In the moonlight I can see my cat Zach running ahead of us, but really I only know that it is Zach by inference, it could be another cat and until he comes close I wouldn't know. Moonlight can trick us into thinking we can see clearly, when actually we are, to quote St Paul 'seeing through a glass darkly'.

When we have always lived in the darkness and seen only by the moonlight, we can think that what we are seeing is all that there is to see, we don't realise that there is so much more to the world that we are unable to see. This is what Isaiah is talking about, people living by the half light of the moon, thinking that is it, and then suddenly, Jesus, the light of the world dawns upon them and they can see clearly, they can see all the detail.

Our Isaiah reading tells us these things about Christ's light. It is:

- The light that casts out the thick darkness
- The light that brings children home
- The light that brings nations together
- The light that proclaims the praise of the Lord

Jesus is the light that illuminates the darkness, Jesus shows us how things really are...

When we proclaim that Jesus is who he says he is; that he is our good God, come to live amongst us, come to lead us out of the darkness into the light, come to illuminate the darkness with his love. When we proclaim that Jesus is the one we look to and follow as the Magi followed the star, then we begin to see clearly, and not only that, we begin to shine. 'Arise, shine, for your light has come!'

The reading from Matthew presents us with a clear choice as to how we respond to the light of Christ. The magi laid everything on the line to find Jesus, to fall at his feet and worship him, they gave up their homes to travel for as long as it took, not knowing how far they would need to go. They gave their riches as offerings to Christ. And they risked their lives disobeying Herod in order to be obedient to God.

In contrast Herod would do anything to prevent Jesus' light from shining, he was not willing to give up an iota of power or status, he would not bow down and worship. Herod longed for people to walk by his light, and was blind to the real light of Christ.

At the start of this new year, the feast of Epiphany gives us the opportunity to reassess our response to Jesus. Are we like the wise men, willing to lay it all down for the joy of meeting Jesus, knowing Jesus is better than anything this world can offer. Or are we like Herod, clinging to our own glory, unwilling to look at Jesus.

The invitation of our readings today is the invitation to step out of the darkness into the light, the invitation to go from walking in the moonlight, to seeing clearly in the sunlight, the invitation to shine with the light of Christ.

### **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.

### **† 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>

**THE CHURCH IN ALDEBURGH**

**A SERVICE FOR THE  
WEEK OF PRAYER FOR  
CHRISTIAN UNITY**

**SUNDAY 18<sup>th</sup> JANUARY**

**at 6pm**

**AT OUR LADY AND ST PETER CATHOLIC  
CHURCH, THE TERRACE, ALDEBURGH**

*The theme for 2026 is “One  
Body, One Spirit”*

***ALL ARE WELCOME***

# ALDE SANDLINGS BENEFICE QUIZ NIGHT

Aldeburgh Church Hall  
Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January 7pm



We welcome you all to join us for a  
light-hearted general knowledge fun quiz  
evening, to raise funds for

The Alde Sandlings Benefice  
Churches – Aldeburgh,  
Aldringham, Friston and  
Knodishall



£9.50 entry inc a hot supper!  
Just bring a bottle.  
A fun evening, and of course  
lots of laughter.

**YOU ARE ALL VERY WELCOME**  
Tell your friends & family!

If you would like to join us, please let us  
know for catering purposes by Monday 19<sup>th</sup>  
January stating any dietary requirements.

Email:

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



### **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**

### **£££ 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/>

### **† 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

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

### **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.
- **Benefice Quiz Evening – Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January at 7pm in Aldeburgh Church Hall – See notice. Book your table now!!**
- Benefice Ash Wednesday Service – 18<sup>th</sup> February at 7pm at Knodishall
- Mothering Sunday Services throughout the Benefice - Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March
- Palm Sunday Services throughout the Benefice – Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March

### **† Pilgrims Together †**

#### **Pilgrims Online Wednesdays**

Wednesday Gathering to Worship, Reflect and Pray

6.30pm (open from 6.10)

**All are welcome to any of the Pilgrims events.**

### **Road Closures on The B1353 Thorpe Road affecting St Andrew's Church Aldringham**

For those who aren't aware the road leading to St Andrew's Church will be closed for schedule works from the 5<sup>th</sup> January to the estimated 30<sup>th</sup> January. For further information please click on the link below.

<https://www.scottishpowerrenewables.com/offshore/east-anglia/east-anglia-two/east-anglia-two-and-one-north-project-activity>

Those heading from Aldringham and Leiston etc by car will need to use the alternative route through Aldeburgh during this time.