



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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Tel: 01728 582213

The Revd Nichola Winter
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Curate: The Revd Mary Brown
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The Revd Johanna Mabey
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Sunday 18th January Second Sunday of Epiphany

Services in The Alde Sandlings Benefice this Sunday

Aldeburgh	8.00am	Holy Communion	Prebendary Derek Johnson
	11.00am	Holy Communion	Revd Mary Brown
Aldringham	11.00am	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,

As I write, I have many of this week's news stories buzzing around my head. My, what a mess this world is in.

With this in mind, I hope that you all enjoy Christopher's sermon this week as much as I have. He and I have spoken about how political it is, and I know that he wonders whether some people think it might be too political to preach from the pulpit. But I think he has done absolutely the correct thing. As Christians we are called to be political. It would be inappropriate for us to recommend a particular party for example, but in a wider sense of the word, we should be engaging with politics.

The difference between how we engage and how others engage though, is that we are called to be transcendental – to be aware of and to engage with the worldly, but to keep our eyes and our senses fixed on the divine. We should challenge injustice. We should love the unloved. We should clothe the naked and feed the hungry and work towards peace for all. And we should do this in the name of Jesus. Transcendental Politics. Now that would change the world.

With my prayers as always, for our community here and for the wider world,

Sarah

† RIP CANON JOHN GILES †

We are very sad to announce the death of our dearest friend Canon John Giles at the age of 90. John will be remembered with great affection by so many, including his friendship, wisdom and talent for writing informative articles for the benefice newsletter and his thought provoking sermons. Many of you will remember John fondly with a smile, whizzing along on his trusted push bike around the town of Aldeburgh. And the celebrations of his 60th ordination back in 2021, and his production of Britten's Noye's Fludde in 2000. He will be sadly missed. Our thoughts and prayers go to Jill, Kate, Robert, Henry, and William. The funeral will be at Aldeburgh Parish Church on Tuesday 10th February at 12 noon.

Collect

Eternal Lord,
our beginning and our end:
bring us with the whole creation
to your glory, hidden through past ages
and made known
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

First Reading

Isaiah 49.1-7

Listen to me, O coastlands, pay attention, you peoples from far away! The Lord called me before I was born, while I was in my mother's womb he named me. He made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow, in his quiver he hid me away. And he said to me, 'You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.' But I said, 'I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my cause is with the Lord, and my reward with my God.' And now the Lord says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honoured in the sight of the Lord, and my God has become my strength-he says, 'It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.' Thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations, the slave of rulers, 'Kings shall see and stand up, princes, and they shall prostrate themselves, because of the Lord, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.'

Second Reading

I Corinthians 1.1-9

Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind-just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you-so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Gospel Reading

John 1.29-42

The next day he saw Jesus coming towards him and declared, 'Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, "After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me." I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.' And John testified, 'I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God.' The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, 'Look, here is the Lamb of God!' The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, 'What are you looking for?' They said to him, 'Rabbi' (which translated means Teacher), 'where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come and see.' They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his brother Simon and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which is translated Anointed). He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, 'You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas' (which is translated Peter).

† 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>

Sermon by The Very Revd Christopher Lewis

11th January – First Sunday of Epiphany

The epiphany season is now...when in the Church we talk of 'revelation'. That's a strange word, often associated with newspapers – revealing things of a dubious nature. Or sometimes the term is used when some New Invention has been kept secret, and is then revealed.

In the Christian faith the reference is to God, God revealing himself. Remember those passages often read from Old Testament writings: big bangs, flashes of glory and victory over the enemy – David and Goliath...quite political as well as religious. Yet if you look at the bible's New Testament, God the Father is understood to be revealing Himself in the person of his Son, that Jesus is one in being with God the Father, showing love like His – the Jesus about whose baptism by 'John the Baptist' we have just heard in the Gospel reading. The Jesus who taught, who healed, who gathered people around Him through his example, who constantly was an example, one who suffered and died because He was seen as a threat to those in authority.

The baptism was, in a sense, the unveiling/the revealing ceremony. Here was a new and public message. It was not a matter of mysteries and special formulas or indeed a matter of the victories of the people of Israel, but it was a message for the world. As St Paul later taught so clearly, Jesus was and is for the WHOLE world, not just for the locals. The great truths of Christianity: salvation and hope, repentance and re-birth – all are for everyone. They can be put at risk in the world, as Jesus put himself at risk. And with and beside Jesus is His Father and the Holy Spirit, showing that Christian faith is private, but also is public for it can be revealed.

We need to find ways in which this truth can be understood today. We could start in a surprising place - Martin Luther King is one example of a person who lived the Epiphany of God. For him, the faith was public and, like Jesus, he had his epiphanies, his revelations of God. And his life was connected to his baptism, his launching which was some time before, but relevant all the time. As Martin Luther King once said – I quote: 'At the centre of the Christian faith is the conviction that in the universe there is a God of power who is able to do exceedingly abundant things in nature and in history - the God whom we worship is not a weak and incompetent God. He is about to beat back gigantic waves of opposition and to bring-low prodigious mountains of evil. The ringing testimony of the Christian faith is that God is able.'

Martin Luther King was a Baptist Minister and Civil Rights Campaigner who believed that political and social engagement go together with spreading the faith. Two of his book titles: 'Strength to Love' and 'I have a Dream'. His explicit proclaiming of the faith, led to his assassination in 1968.

We may find that all a bit much, so how about looking around in the world of the last week or two. Given the last few days, there is NO point in trying to offer Trump's actions as related to God's will. Better, look in the newspapers, and there I saw news of a local campaign which was going on in Caerphilly in Wales. Not easy to understand, for the news was of a group of locals and some Ukrainian refugees, who opposed a more right-wing and organized party – a party which reckoned that the refugees were a nuisance and should be sent home. It was the local and incomer campaign which took on/opposed the national campaign, and won. If you think it is wicked of me to introduce some politics into a sermon, do beat me up over the coffee afterwards. But I believe that this bit of local politics had a religious aspect, namely the full lives of some refugees, free from some of the suffering of Ukraine, wanting truth to prevail.

In relation to that, I have one other point: a person to refer to, who is a Ukrainian Roman Catholic, a committed Christian. She is a refugee who lives in Leiston and uses her training in cookery, working in a bakery company which makes cakes. She is well-trained and works a full week. Almost all her earnings are sent back to Ukraine where her family lives and where people are in deep trouble. Rather like all the other immigrants, like many of the nurses in our hospitals, the system over here needs this cake-making visitor, but she also has a means for expressing her faith in God in order to help those in great need.

Immigrants are everywhere. Trump is one. I'm from Wales, name of Lewis. Aldeburgh...well, probably it housed Scandinavians with Viking blood, having settled here after the Viking invasions of this area in the 9th century. Does that mean that we are hated? No, what matters is our behaviour.

It is then appropriate to ask what is a tricky question: how do we make our own faith public/revealed ...ourselves? No boasting, but we can perhaps on occasion be shown as we really are - at times pointing beyond ourselves, revealing something of God. Is there a neighbour who will say something like 'despite all his or her thoughts, I will never forget her/his visits when I was sick'. Or 'He/she was at his most forgetful, forgetting his own interests in the cause of people who are being exploited' or 'She always sees hope and love, even at the worst of times'. We could use remarks of that kind as recognition of us living up to our baptism, revealing something of our faith.

The Epiphany festival calls us to reflect on God-made-known, through others and through us - seen in others and in ourselves. If we have confidence in God, we will put the Christian faith and indeed ourselves at risk, by acting appropriately, especially at a time like the present when the lives of Christians do not always seem to be at their best.

In those circumstances, it is good to reflect on Jesus, on others and on us, ourselves. If you want to go ahead, remember Martin Luther King. After all, Jesus and his immediate followers put themselves at risk, as did St Paul and many others later, spreading the faith in the Roman Empire. Baptism is, as it were, a launching and once launched we need to find ways which reveal truly what it is that we have in our hearts and in our minds – in our souls.

Post Communion

God of glory,
you nourish us with your Word
who is the bread of life:
fill us with your Holy Spirit
that through us the light of your glory
may shine in all the world.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE CHURCH IN ALDEBURGH

A SERVICE FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

SUNDAY 18th 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

**Next Week – Sunday 25th January
Third Sunday of Epiphany**

**IF YOU ARE THINKING OF JOINING US, FOR THE QUIZ -
PLEASE DO LET CLAIRE
(admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk) KNOW ASAP TO
KNOW FOR CATERING PURPOSES.**

ALDE SANDLINGS BENEFICE QUIZ NIGHT

**Aldeburgh Church Hall
Saturday 24th 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 19th
January stating any dietary requirements.**

Email:

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 **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 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 24th January at 7pm in Aldeburgh Church Hall – See notice. Book your table now!!**
- Benefice Ash Wednesday Service – 18th February at 7pm at Knodishall
- Mothering Sunday Services throughout the Benefice - Sunday 15th March
- Palm Sunday Services throughout the Benefice – Sunday 29th 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 5th January to the estimated 30th 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.