



## 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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## Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March Second Sunday of Lent

### Services in The Alde Sandlings Benefice this Sunday

Aldeburgh	8.00am	Holy Communion	Prebendary Derek Johnson
	11.00am	Family Service	Revd Sarah du Boulay
Aldringham	11.00am	Holy Communion	Revd Mary Brown
Friston	9.30am	Holy Communion	Revd Sarah du Boulay
Knodishall	9.30am	Morning Prayer	Revd Mary Brown

### A message from our Rector, Revd Sarah du Boulay

Dear friends,

I had the privilege of presiding at the 10am BCP service of Holy Communion this morning, and whilst planning my short homily, I very clearly heard God say 'be quiet. Just be quiet for a bit.'

So instead of a homily, we sat in silent contemplative prayer for a while and then continued our service. And it struck me that in the busyness and noisiness of our lives, many of us don't often get the chance to just be quiet and spend time with God.

So this introduction is an invitation to do just that. Set a timer, get comfortable and spend some quiet time, just you and God....

In the name of Christ. Amen.

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

Sarah

### **Collect**

Almighty God,  
you show to those who are in error the light of your truth,  
that they may return to the way of righteousness:  
grant to all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion,  
that they may reject those things that are contrary to their profession,  
and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same;  
through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### **First Reading**

#### **Genesis 12.1-4a**

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.

### **Second Reading**

#### **Romans 4.1-5, 13-17**

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.' Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. 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.

## **Gospel Reading**

### **John 3.1 - 17**

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? 'Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. 'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. 'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

## **Sermon by The Very Revd Christopher Lewis, 22<sup>nd</sup> February – First Sunday of Lent**

Lent: the solemn time of the Christian year. Time, among other things to speak about temptation and sin. Time, even, to reel off the seven deadly sins: can you do that? Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Envy, Gluttony, Anger, Sloth...not sure it does us good to learn them by heart.

Just by the way, Pride may be the worst, because of the damage it does both personally and on the grand scale: look at Trump or Putin, then, nearer home, look at oneself. Actually, it is possibly best to concentrate mainly on the Christian positive virtues of love, respect, justice, forgiveness, mercy. But some awareness of temptation and sin is right, nevertheless.

Some people would want a picture of the Devil, probably with horns and a pitchfork in order to personify evil. To see life as a great battle of good and evil is what is called dualism and the devil (must be a he!)- he appears in today's Gospel as a way of describing the temptations of Jesus in the wilderness. It makes a graphic story of Jesus, whose popularity could be seen as an opening to temptation, but who is resolute in refusing to be led astray.

That is the way the devil appears in Matthew's Gospel and in Luke's as well. Yet to understand life as a duel between personifications of Good and Evil is not a help. God the Creator is sovereign, and it is much better to understand our lives and those of others as having freedom to respond to God or not to. In other words, to pray to God that we may use our freedom to follow Jesus Christ, rather than to use our freedom to pursue our own interests and desires.

So it is best to look at ourselves and spot our capacity to turn away from God and to go our own sinful way, without any guiding force apart from ourselves. Or another picture which is more psychological: here is our will being pulled one way and then the other: the wilderness within: sub-conscious and conscious being taken backwards, forwards, sideways.

Then take another picture: the ultra-modern person wheeling and dealing, apologizing and re-arranging, lying and justifying, all on by phone and on social media. Temptation there is everywhere, and sin is having too much of everything, not thinking of others, but being preoccupied with self and all reduced to how you feel. What about others?

Does the account of Jesus in the wilderness help us: the account told in much the same way in the gospels of Matthew and Luke? Jesus has been fasting. He is then tempted to order the stones to become bread, but he answers: 'One does not live by bread alone but by every

word that comes from the mouth of the Lord' (Quoted from Deuteronomy 8;3)

The important point is that Jesus shifts the focus away from lists of sins or complex battles. His focus is on being prepared for any challenge through prayer and his deep relationship with God the Father. In other words, that is where his strength comes from. His preparation enables him to respond to the particular situation.

So Jesus is taken to a pinnacle of the temple. The tempter quotes the psalms about the protection to be given to God's people (Ps 91;11). Jesus harks back to the Hebrew scriptures: Do not put the Lord your God to the test (Deuteronomy 6.16). Jesus is not someone who expects God to do stunts. Rather, he immersed himself in the difficulties and suffering of those around him. He takes the sins of others on his shoulders instead of throwing them back and so challenges us to do the same.

Then Jesus on the high mountain, viewing the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. The invitation to worship the devil and in return to be given power over all that is spread before him. Again, the Old Testament is quoted: Worship the Lord your God and serve only him (Deuteronomy 6.13). That is Jesus' way: worship God and so resist temptation.

The answers on each of the three occasions are significant. Jesus was popular and so a target for the temptation which popularity brings. He does not say that the way to avoid being tempted is strong will-power or indeed long courses of instruction. It is to have a profound relationship with God the Father, in prayer and worship. That is how to 'be prepared'.

On holiday once, we heard the story of a ferryman on the west coast of Ireland who had a crowd of tourists in his boat. The weather was perfect and the passengers were surprised when he said prayers before setting out. Maybe they thought 'superstitious Irish'. Later, however, the wind got up and there was a storm. Some passengers were frightened and prayed; they asked him to pray too. 'No' he replied 'I said my prayers at the beginning. Now I must concentrate on getting the boat across safely.'

That, I think, is a help at least to me about temptation. Jesus' preparation is one which is not a knee-jerk reaction to some immediate crisis or situation. It is long-term preparation for everything, for he has a close relationship to God the Father.

Maybe I see myself caught in a great battle between good and evil, unable to face up to/grasp my own power to choose what is good. Or perhaps I am obsessed by inner struggle, incapable of finding my way out of the forest of competing goods, evils, possibilities. Or maybe I am a post-modern person to whom decisions are relative to my experience and on how good I feel, failing to recognize objective truth.

In each case, of course, self-understanding is important. Perhaps an idea of the sins to beware of: envy, pride. But the real answer is much more profound. It is to follow Jesus for he was prepared for temptation not so much by knowing lists of sins, but rather by a life of prayer and worship and so his relationship with God the Father. An example in the ferry-man who was prepared for anything by a life of prayer.

So the central point may be summed up in the old saying 'Love God and do what you like'. That could be misunderstood, but I think it is pretty good advice for the wilderness of the world. Lives, all lives, will of course have temptations, crises and agonies of decision. Preparation is less through remembering lists of deadly sins, more through a close relationship with God. And that is what Lent is about.

### **Post Communion**

Almighty God,

you see that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves:

keep us both outwardly in our bodies,

and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities

which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may

assault and hurt the soul; through 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/UCLecK8GovYoaYzIgyOEIKZg>

St Edmundsbury Cathedral Facebook Page

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

**£££ 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 [aldesandlingsbenefice@outlook.com](mailto:aldesandlingsbenefice@outlook.com) 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>

**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**

## **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.
- Riverside Centre Alpha Course – Starting 18<sup>th</sup> February 6.30-9pm. See Poster below
- Deanery Lent Courses – Starting 22<sup>nd</sup> February at Darsham Village Hall 4pm – See poster below.
- World Prayer Day – Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March at 11am at the Fairfield Centre. See notice below for more information.
- Celebration Service for the volunteers of Aldeburgh Town Council – Aldeburgh – Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March at 12 noon.
- Mothering Sunday Services throughout the Benefice - Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March
- Easter Messy Church – Aldeburgh Parish Church – Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March – 10-12 noon
- Palm Sunday Services throughout the Benefice – Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March
- Easter Service Schedule to follow next week

### **† Pilgrims Together †**

#### **Pilgrims Online Wednesdays**

Wednesday Gathering to Worship, Reflect and Pray  
6.30pm (open from 6.10)

#### **Pilgrims Prayer Walk**

**Saturday 7th March starting at the Heritage Hut**  
**Thorpeness at 10am**

We'll find a place for coffee together after!

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



### **World Day of Prayer**

Please join the United Churches of Aldeburgh on Friday 6th March, 11.00am at the Fairfield Centre, to celebrate the World Day of Prayer. This year we will be praying for Nigeria. The country where you are most likely to lose your life for your faith, if you are Christian. There will be a morning service at 11.00am followed by free lunch of soup and bread. **ALL WELCOME**

# Explore life, *faith* & meaning

*Try* Alpha.

**Alpha** begins with introductory video and meal  
**18th February 2026 6.30 - 9.00pm**  
Riverside Centre, Stratford St Andrew, IP17 1LL  
For more info contact Revd Rob  
[rob@alderiverchurch.org](mailto:rob@alderiverchurch.org)

Alpha



## Practising the Love of Jesus

### LENT COURSE

Using the structure of the Five Marks of Mission  
Each Sunday of Lent from 22<sup>nd</sup> February to 29<sup>th</sup> March 2026

22 <sup>nd</sup> February	Telling the Good News
1 <sup>st</sup> March	Teaching Jesus' Way
8 <sup>th</sup> March	Tending to the Needs of the World
15 <sup>th</sup> March	Transforming Injustice
22 <sup>nd</sup> March	Treasuring God's creation
29 <sup>th</sup> March	Total love

Darsham Village Hall, IP17 3FA  
4pm - 5:30pm

what3words: taller.brilliant.educated

Refreshments will be served  
No cost, but donations toward expenses welcome

## ALDEBURGH PARISH CHURCH ST PETER & ST PAUL'S

Invites you to



COME AND HEAR THE EASTER STORY &  
JOIN IN EASTER CRAFTS  
& MUCH MORE FUN FOR ALL AGES

**THERE WILL ALSO BE AN EASTER EGG HUNT!!**

at ALDEBURGH PARISH CHURCH  
SATURDAY 21<sup>st</sup> MARCH  
10am till 12 Noon

ALL WELCOME

NO CHARGE. JUST PLEASE LET US  
KNOW YOU ARE COMING, SO WE HAVE  
ENOUGH MATERIALS.



Please email Fran Smith at  
[aldesandlingsbenefice@outlook.com](mailto:aldesandlingsbenefice@outlook.com)

**Next Week – Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March  
Third Sunday of Lent**