



## 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  
Email: [revd.sarah@btinternet.com](mailto:revd.sarah@btinternet.com)  
Tel: 01728 582213

The Revd Nichola Winter  
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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 22<sup>nd</sup> March Fifth Sunday of Lent

### Services in The Alde Sandlings Benefice this Sunday

Aldeburgh	11.00am	Holy Communion	Revd Sarah du Boulay
Aldringham	11.00am	Family Service	Revd Mary Brown
Friston	9.30am	Holy Communion	Revd Mary Brown
Knodishall	9.30am	Service of the Word	Revd Sarah du Boulay

### Collect

Most merciful God,  
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ  
delivered and saved the world:  
grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross  
we may triumph in the power of his victory;  
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**

### **Ezekiel 37.1-14**

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all round them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, 'Mortal, can these bones live?' I answered, 'O Lord God, you know.' Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord.' So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.' I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude. Then he said to me, 'Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely." Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.'

## **Second Reading**

### **Romans 8.6-11**

To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

## **Gospel Reading**

### **John 11.1-45**

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' But when Jesus heard it, he said, 'This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?' Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.' After saying this, he told them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.' The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.' Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow-disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.' When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.' When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.' And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came

where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?' Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead for four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upwards and said, 'Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.' When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.' Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

### † 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>

**Sermon by Revd Mary Brown,  
15<sup>th</sup> March – Fourth Sunday of Lent/Mothering Sunday**

The commercial holiday ‘Mother’s Day’ is complicated for many people. I’ve noticed that in the last couple of years more companies are acknowledging this complexity and sending emails a few weeks before with the option to ‘opt-out’ of marketing around this day.

Whilst for some this is a happy day to be spent with family, for many this is a hard day. For those who had or have a tricky relationship with their mother, those who never knew their mother, those whose mother is no longer with them. For mothers who have lost their children or lost contact with their children. For women who longed to be mothers but for a plethora of possible reasons have not been able to. For women who had no desire to become mothers, upon whom societal expectations hang heavy.

Mothering Sunday, which we are celebrating here today, I believe, has the potential to be much less complicated if we understand what it is really about.

Mothering Sunday is not at its heart actually about mothers, but rather about the church as mother. Mothering Sunday was traditionally the day when domestic servants were given the day off. Yes often this would be in order to return to their home village, to their mothers or their children, but most of all this day was about returning to their home church, the church in which they had been baptised. The mothering that was honoured on this day was the mothering done by the church.

I’d like to offer two ways in which the church is mother to us all, both of which are illustrated by our gospel reading.

Firstly the church can be seen as ‘mother’ because it is through the church that we draw close to the God who mothers us.

Secondly the church can be seen as ‘mother’ because in the church we have many mothers, and are mother to many.

Behind me on the wall is a memorial that depicts our gospel reading today, this precious moment from the passion narrative in the gospel of John. Jesus is on the cross, dying, in agony, the soldiers have cast lots and divided his clothes. Just three verses later he will breathe his last breath. But here he pauses:

‘When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, ‘Woman, here is your son.’ Then he said to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother.’ And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.’

We know from earlier in the gospel accounts that Mary had had other children after Jesus was born. We don’t however know where they are at this moment. Perhaps because Mary chose to follow Jesus and join with his disciples, his siblings have rejected her.

For whatever reason, Jesus knew that at the moment of his death Mary needed shelter and protection. At the moment of the death of her firstborn son, Mary would become like one who was childless. And so, in the midst of his suffering - in the midst of this most important point in history when God-become-flesh was about to give up his life for us - Jesus - Mary’s son but also her God - extends his loving care towards her. Making sure that she will be loved and cared for in his death as she has been in his life.

Whilst God invites us to call him Father, throughout scripture his loving care for us is described through mothering imagery and metaphors.

In Deuteronomy God describes himself as the one who gave birth to his people:

‘You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you; you forgot the God who gave you birth.’ (Deut 32:18)

There is a recurring metaphor in the Old Testament of God being like a bird hiding her chicks in the shadow of her wings (Deut 32:11-12; Ps 71:8; 57:1; 91:4), which Jesus reiterates when he cries out to Jerusalem: ‘how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing’ (Mt 23:37; Lk 13:34)

In Isaiah God compares his pain for his people to the pain of a woman in labour; his inability to forget his people to the inability of a woman to forget giving birth to a child; he tells his people that he will comfort them as a mother comforts her child (Is 42:14; 49:15; 66:13).

In Hosea, God describes his love for his people through the actions of a mother teaching her child to walk, and his defence of his people as like the actions of a mother bear. (Hos 11:3-4; 13:8).

So on this Mothering Sunday let’s hear this account of Jesus’ final actions on the cross, and remember that in God we are perfectly mothered.

This truth helps us both to better honour our earthly mothers who have mirrored God in their actions, and to find healing from earthly mothers who have failed to do so.

This truth can help mothers in their exhaustion and self-criticism to draw strength from God whose mothering of them makes them able to mother their children.

### **Mothering Sunday is about God, who mothers us first and mothers us better.**

In this moment Jesus also demonstrated how the community of believers he had been gathering was to function as family, redefined and remade. Mary is given a new opportunity to be a mother to John, and John is given a new opportunity to be mothered by Mary. They are able to accept each other in these roles because of what the church really is.

Returning to your 'mother church' does not mean returning to a building. Because the church is not a building. The church is all people who call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, who gather together to worship him. The church is the Body of Christ, the Kingdom of God, the community of all believers. Within this community Jesus tells us that we are to function as family, we are mother, father, son, daughter, brother and sister to one another.

### **Mothering Sunday is about the church as true family.**

Both of these forms of mothering are given to us because of what Jesus did on the cross, and because on the third day he rose again from the dead. It is through Jesus' death and resurrection that we are welcomed into relationship with God, and welcomed into the Kingdom of God. Because Jesus died for us and rose again from the dead we are able to know God's mothering love for us, and to be part of this world changing community, which is the church.

Today, whether you are celebrating with your mother or your children, whether you are mourning your mother or your child, whether you are in the grief of not having known your mother or your children, or of not having born the children you longed to bear. Whether like most of us, you are experiencing some complicated mix of joy and sorrow. May you know and experience the truth, that in the Kingdom of God we are all enabled to be mothers and to be mothered, after the model of God who mothers us better than any earthly mother ever could.

## **Post Communion**

Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us  
that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters  
we do also for you: give us the will to be the servant of others  
as you were the servant of all,  
and gave up your life and died for us,  
but are alive and reign, now and for ever.

### **£££ 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.
- Palm Sunday Services throughout the Benefice – Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March at normal service times.
- Holy Week – Monday – Friston 6pm – Compline
- Holy Week – Tuesday – Knodishall 6pm – Compline
- Holy Week – Wednesday – Aldeburgh 10am – Holy Communion
- Holy Week – Thursday – Aldeburgh 10am – Holy Communion
- Holy Week – Thursday – Aldringham – 6.30pm – Holy Communion with Stripping of the Altar
- Easter Service Schedule – See further below in this newsletter, and the April calendar attached with this newsletter email.
- APCM's in The Alde Sandlings Benefice

Aldeburgh Parish Church – Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April (after the 11am service)

Friston Parish Church – Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May (after the 9.30am service)

Knodishall Parish Church – Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May (after the 9.30am service)

Aldringham Parish Church – Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May (after the 11am service)

† **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 Pilgrim's events.**

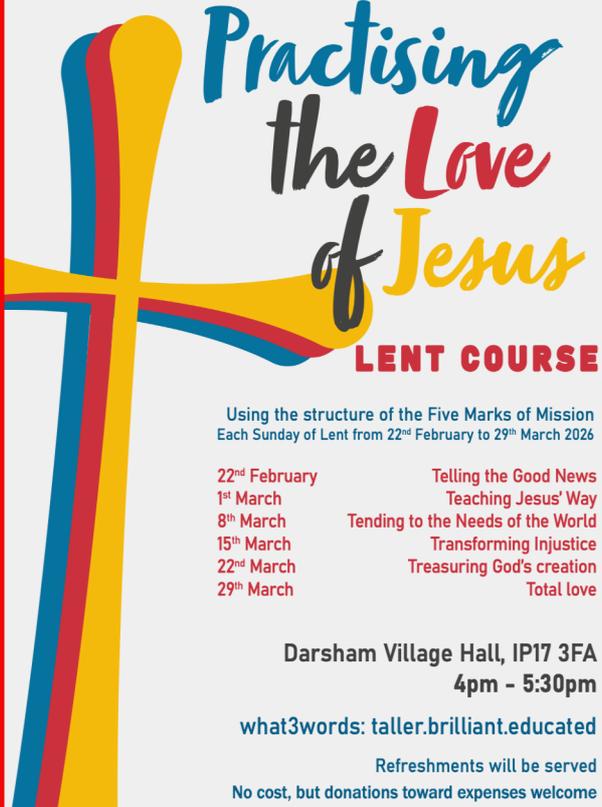
† **Easter Lilies at Aldeburgh** †

Only about four weeks to Easter! If you would like to sponsor a Lily stem in memory of a loved one, please see Karen with the name of the person/persons you wish to remember. There is also a sign up form in the west porch. Each stem costs £3.50. It is best to give your donation directly to Karen or do contact [aldesandlingsbenefice@outlook.com](mailto:aldesandlingsbenefice@outlook.com)

**St Andrew's, Aldringham, Lent Lunches  
at The Country Club, Thorpeness  
on the following Wednesdays in Lent**

March 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> – 12.30pm – 2pm

**CANCELLED**



**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

## **Coffee Mornings at the Fairfield Centre in March**

Every Monday 10.30am – 11.30am throughout March

All welcome to pop in for a chat and a nice hot drink. Plenty to see and do.

Every Tuesday throughout March - 10.30am – 11.30am

SEND (Special Educational needs & Disabilities) Coffee Mornings.

Whether you are diagnosed or waiting to be diagnosed – come along and chat to other about their experiences.

Supported by East Suffolk Council

## **APCM'S IN THE ALDE SANDLINGS BENEFICE**

Aldeburgh Parish Church – Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April (after the 11am service)

Friston Parish Church – Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May (after the 9.30am service)

Knodishall Parish Church – Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May (after the 9.30am service)

Aldringham Parish Church – Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May (after the 11am service)

## **NEW ADMIN E-MAIL ADDRESS**

**From the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2026 the new email address for the Alde Sandlings Benefice Administrator will be:**

[aldesandlingsbenefice@outlook.com](mailto:aldesandlingsbenefice@outlook.com)

**Next Week – Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March  
Palm Sunday**

# EASTER SERVICES IN THE ALDE SANDLINGS BENEFICE



## EASTER SUNDAY 6.00am – SUNRISE HOLY COMMUNION BENEFICE SERVICE AT THORPENESS BEACH

### ALDEBURGH PARISH CHURCH

#### GOOD FRIDAY

9am – EASTER GARDEN MAKING  
9.45am – WALK OF WITNESS WITH  
UNITED CHURCHES  
12 noon – PRAYER STATIONS  
1pm – MUSICAL REFLECTION  
2pm – HOUR BEFORE THE CROSS

#### EASTER SUNDAY

11.00am – HOLY COMMUNION



### FRISTON PARISH CHURCH

#### GOOD FRIDAY

2pm – HOUR BEFORE THE CROSS

#### EASTER SUNDAY

9.30am – HOLY COMMUNION



### ALDRINGHAM PARISH CHURCH

#### MAUNDY THURSDAY

6.30pm – HOLY COMMUNION

#### EASTER SUNDAY

11.00am – HOLY COMMUNION



### KNODISHALL PARISH CHURCH

#### GOOD FRIDAY

9.30am – JOINT SERVICE AT THE  
METHODIST CHURCH

#### EASTER SUNDAY

9.30am – HOLY COMMUNION



**WE WISH YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY AND BLESSED EASTER**

**Please do keep in touch by visiting our website for service times  
and much more at [www.aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk](http://www.aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk).**