



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 Mark Lowther

Email: mark@thelowthers.com

Tel: 01728 452807

The Revd Nichola Winter

Email: njwinter@whd.co.uk

The Revd Sheila Hart

Email: sheila.hart49@gmail.com

The Revd Johanna Mabey

Email: rev.johannamabey@gmail.com

The Revd James Marston

Email: marstonjames@hotmail.com

Tel: 01728 688451

HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh
10th June 1921 – 9th April 2021



18th April, The Third Sunday of Easter

Message from The Rector

I would like to begin by thanking everyone who made sure that we marked the death of Prince Philip last Sunday with due decorum. Services were amended, bells rung, suitable photographs found and framed, all to pay tribute to a long life dedicated to the service of Queen and country. Bells will ring again in the hour before the start of Prince Philip's funeral service on Saturday afternoon and the official period of mourning then ends at 8.00 on Sunday morning. We continue to hold the Queen and the Royal Family in our prayers.

Last Sunday the Archbishop of Canterbury preached a very thoughtful sermon in Canterbury Cathedral. This is part of what he said:

.. it is God who creates, God who calls and God who sends. For His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh there was a willingness, a remarkable willingness, to take the hand he was dealt in life and straightforwardly to follow its call, to search its meaning, to go out and on as sent, to enquire and think, to trust and to pray. ...

We should not exaggerate. The Duke would have been the first to harrumph strongly at over-spiritualisation of the world he found, let alone of himself. The reality of our life in this world is of old and new together - of strengths and weaknesses. We should not become hyper-spiritual or idealistic. But when death comes we bear each other up, as did those first Christians. We trust the risen Christ as did the disciples, because all has changed with the new creation. When death comes there is another sort of change: there is deep loss and profound sorrow, but there is neither eternal separation nor darkness forever. ... Our lives are not completed before death, but their eternity is prepared.

So we can indeed pray that The Duke of Edinburgh may rest in peace and rise in glory. We may pray for comfort. We may pray and offer love for all those who find that a great life leaves a very great gap – for the Royal family and the millions who have themselves suffered loss. We can know that the presence of Christ will bring peace, and the light of Christ will shine strongly, and it is in that light that we can strengthen one another with eternal hope.

A good message, I think, not just for the Royal Family but for all who have lost loved ones.

A much more mundane note to finish with. This weekend I have a Sunday off and so won't be recording one of our services and putting it online. There are services in all of our churches at the usual times and Friston's 9.45 service of Morning Prayer will be live-streamed from the church. Details of how to join that service (and all are most welcome) are elsewhere on the pew-sheet. And don't forget that services from our cathedral are also live-streamed, including, on Sunday, Sung Eucharist at 11.00am and Choral Evensong at 3.30pm. All of the details – and links to the relevant Orders of Service – are here:

<https://stedscathedral.org/worship/>

With love – and, once again, renewed Easter Greetings

Mark

Collect

Almighty Father, who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples with the sight of the risen Lord: give us such knowledge of his presence with us, that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life and serve you continually in righteousness and truth; 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

Acts 3.12-19

When Peter saw it, he addressed the people, 'You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you. 'And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.

Second Reading

I John 3.1-7

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure. Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that he was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who abides in him sins; no one who sins has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

Gospel Reading

Luke 24.36b-48

Jesus himself stood among the disciples and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, 'Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.' And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence. Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.'

Post Communion

Living God, your Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread: open the eyes of our faith, that we may see him in all his redeeming work; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

Reflection for 18th April – Third Sunday of Easter, by, The Revd Johanna Mabey

Luke 24:36b-48

"May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord our rock and our redeemer."

The twenty-fourth chapter of Luke's Gospel just can't seem to get enough of the resurrection... in the space of forty-nine verses, three Easter stories are told.

First there's the account of the resurrection itself, next is the encounter on the road to Emmaus, and the third is described in today's reading.

As the disciples discussed what had happened at Emmaus, Jesus came and stood among them. During their conversation about the resurrection, he appeared. He hadn't knocked at the door, nobody had let him in, and yet, there he was, surprisingly, unexpectedly real in their midst.

What did this mean? What does it mean for us today?

Perhaps it means at the very least that there's no way to keep the risen Christ out of any situation. There's no hopeless heart, no bruised or hurting place that's off limits for the resurrected Christ.

I once saw an inscription that read, "Bidden or unbidden, God is present."

That's what these post-resurrection stories want to tell us so desperately. Bidden or unbidden, the spirit of the living Christ is loose in the world and will come to us wherever we are. That's a good thought to hold on to when sometimes God seems far away...

Even though Jesus was right next to them, the disciples couldn't believe that he was there. They were "startled and terrified." They thought they had seen a ghost.

Jesus asked them, "Why are you afraid and why do you have doubts in your heart?" They said nothing. Even if they'd tried - they had no words to explain it.

But why are we afraid sometimes? If we trust and believe in God?

And why do we sometimes doubt?

How is it that on Easter Day we can sing “Thine be the glory” with all our hearts and yet at other times, the promise of life after death, and the assurance that love is the strongest force in the universe seem so far away?

Why do we doubt and why do we fear? ... we just do.

The disciples had no better answer. Jesus said to them, “Let me show you. Look at my hands and at my feet.” A ghost doesn’t have hands and feet, flesh and bones. “See that I am here.”

Then Jesus asks, “Do you have anything here to eat?”

As a former restaurateur, this must be one of the best questions in the whole Bible.

They give him a piece of broiled fish. We don’t know if it came with any side orders... but he eats it in their presence. What a striking scene. It’s not only here that Jesus eats food in the company of his disciples. In John’s Gospel, Jesus has a huge breakfast barbecue on the beach on the Sea of Galilee and he breaks bread and shares it with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus.

Barbara Brown Taylor, an American theologian and priest, has speculated that maybe it’s because eating is so necessary for life, and so is He. Or perhaps it’s because sharing food is what makes us human. Most other species forage and eat alone, but human beings seem to love eating together – for me it’s been one of the hardest things during the pandemic – not to be with others for special meals. Even when we must eat alone, most of us will open a magazine or turn on the tv just for company. It is, at any rate, one of the clues to His presence. There’s always the chance, when we are eating together, that we will discover the risen Lord in our midst.

Our next-door neighbours in North London when I was growing up were kind and hospitable. They would always set an extra place at their dinner table for every meal, but nobody ever sat in it. I spent quite a lot of time next door - they had seven daughters; an inexhaustible range of friends to hang out with.

One day I asked about the extra place and was told it was for Jesus. It made no sense to me then, but now it does!

Just as in the Emmaus story, our eyes need to be opened to the possibility of Jesus in our midst.

But let's not forget that before those disciples realised they were talking to Jesus, they were in real pain – confused, afraid and sad following Jesus' death. Jesus didn't rush them towards the good news - instead he walked with them through that pain. In his time, he revealed his presence in a way they could understand.

Perhaps we and many others have been walking with H.M The Queen and the royal family during this past week...walking with them in the pain and sadness of their loss.

As the Queen herself once observed, the pain of grief is just as much part of life as the joy of love; it is perhaps the price we pay for love, the cost of commitment.

May we all know the risen Lord Jesus Christ in our midst, and may we find consolation in his word. No eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him.

Amen

The Week Ahead
Next Sunday 25th April
The Fourth Sunday of Easter

Fed up with the "to do" lists?
Take some time to reflect on the "to be" list

- Help me to reflect your love today.
- Help me to display your joy.
- Help me to manifest Your peace.
- Help me to practice Your patience.
- Help me to express Your kindness.
- Help me to make known Your goodness.
- Help me to reveal Your faithfulness.
- Help me to show Your gentleness. Help me to exhibit Your self-control.

NOTICES

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. Whether it be a story to tell, or tips or recipes or a notice to be added to spread the word.

Deadline - Thursday 4pm Please

📣 Food Banks at the East of England Co-op 📣

Foodbanks provide a valuable service to those in need in our communities and have an even more vital role to play as we navigate our way through these unprecedented times. 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.

The Trussel Trust Organisation

Food banks in our network have seen an increase in the number of food parcels given out over the last few months due to Coronavirus, so any donations are much appreciated. You can find out which items your local food bank is most in need of by entering your postcode here - <https://www.trusselltrust.org/give-food/> By clicking on the food bank's name, you can also find out where to drop off your donations. You should also check the food banks website or social media pages for any changes to opening hours or operations as a result of the Coronavirus before dropping off donations -

If you would prefer to make a financial donation, then please visit the food bank's website (under 'Give help') or you can donate to the Trussell Trust centrally by contacting our Supporter Care team on 01722 580 178 or emailing supportercare@trusselltrust.org

Tuesday Coffee Morning with Mark & Friends

Our regular Zoom coffee morning will be from 10.30am – 11.30am every Tuesday. All are very welcome. Grab your favourite morning beverage and let's have a good ole chat – just like we used to.

Please contact admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk for the links.

† **Friston Sunday Services on Zoom** †

Friston will be holding a live Zoom service for all those who wish to join on Sunday starting at 9.45am.

It will be a Common Worship Morning Prayer. **All are welcome!**

The meetings start from 9.40am every Sunday morning

Please contact admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk for the links.

† **Pilgrims Together on Wednesdays** †

The Pilgrims worship together every Wednesday.

You are all more than welcome to join them via 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. The worship is about 30 minutes long. We have a different worship sheet each week which goes out on a Monday ahead of the Wednesday.

People are more than welcome to

email pilgrimstogether473@gmail.com

to receive a copy or be added to our mailing list.

Please contact admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk for the links.

Pilgrim Event Dates for your Diary

Next Zoom Pilgrim Quiz Saturday:

Saturday 24th April from 7pm,

Please contact admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk for info.

Next Zoom Pilgrim Ceilidh:

Saturday 8th May from 7pm

The first half will focus on sharing stories, memories and experiences since March 2020: What has given us hope? What have we been released from / let go of? What are we looking forward to experiencing again? What new experiences have we had that we shall carry forward?

The second half will continue our sharing of local stories.

Please contact admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk for info.