
Your monthly update from Earley St Peter's church: August 2025

1 message

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1 August 2025 at 08:06



Your Monthly Update from Earley St Peter's – August 2025



Thought for the month *from the Revd Kate Wakeman-Toogood*

As many of you are aware, over the last couple of months I have been driving up and down to Birmingham frequently to visit my mum in hospital. It is a journey that I'm very familiar with, but not one that I usually make this often. After the first journey up to the hospital, I made the decision to think about how I could best use my hours in the car; how I could find as much enjoyment as possible, or how I could use the time productively. I decided to listen to audio books of childhood classics that I hadn't read since I was a child, ones that have always been enjoyed by adults and young people alike.

The first book I listened to was *The Secret Garden*, which I loved as a child (and loved even more as an adult, apparently!) Immediately after finishing the first book, I began listening to *Anne of Green Gables*. What

struck me, only a few chapters into the book, was the amount of wisdom and theological reflection that the story contained, usually in the musings and ramblings of Anne herself. There was one quote in particular that inspired me to base this reflection on Anne's words, and these words were about prayer.

"Saying one's prayers isn't exactly the same thing as praying".

Anne says these words *meditatively* and they are spoken not long after Anne is taught about the importance of prayer, in particular saying her night-time prayers. This routine had not been part of Anne's upbringing and so, at the age of 11, she was first told the importance of saying her prayers, rather than from a much younger age like most of her peers. I think this gives Anne a different perspective and, also due to her naturally reflective and inquisitive nature, Anne comments that she feels there is a difference between praying and saying one's prayers. I am sure the writer of this book understood the profound nature of this statement in a deeper way than her character Anne would have understood her words. For Anne, it was a statement of observation and reflection.

For me, these words highlight that there *can* be a significant difference between 'saying our prayers' and 'praying', although there is also a great deal of overlap and nuance. However, for Christians, both types of prayer are important. 'Saying one's prayers' usually refers to a daily pattern or rhythm of prayer, which Anne was encouraged to have, and which many Christians today still have. We have Morning Prayer in church and there are other regular types of daily prayer patterns that Christians use. To maintain a pattern of morning and/or evening prayer, either individually or with others, requires discipline. Of course, 'saying one's prayers' is still praying, but there is a rhythm and regularity to it. It is part of a routine where we connect with God and ensure time is built into our lives where God is our focus. This is what Anne of Green Gables began doing each night. There were times she found it difficult or even laborious, but I don't think that's uncommon, because dedication and discipline to a rhythm of prayer can be hard work, depending on how we are feeling. This isn't something that we should berate ourselves for, as tiredness, illness and stress are just some of the reasons why 'saying one's prayers' isn't always easy, but that doesn't mean it isn't important.

However, Anne's observation also highlights the importance of what she calls 'praying'. Anne is referring to more spontaneous, conversational prayer, which may happen at any time and anywhere. This is about

connecting with God throughout the day, sharing good times and bad times, perhaps using language that is less formal. This prayer can help us maintain an awareness of God's presence with us outside the structured and official times of 'saying our prayers'.

I'd encourage us to pray both ways; setting aside times to say prayers where we actively choose to focus on God, and also involving God more regularly in our daily lives by praying in a conversational way. If one type of prayer comes more naturally than the other, then perhaps it would be good to step outside our comfort zones and find new ways to nurture and grow our relationship with God.

Kate

Services and Events in August

(the information below is also available via My ChurchSuite and our web site)

We meet every weekday morning at 8.45am (Fridays at 8.30am) in the church for Morning Prayer. All welcome.

Sunday 3 August	8am	Holy Communion <i>Readings: Colossians 3.1-11; Luke 12.13-21</i>
	10am	Bread & Wine: <i>Reading: Luke 12.13-21</i>
	6.30pm	Evening Worship <i>Readings: Genesis 50.4-end; 1 Corinthians 14.1-9</i>
Monday 4 August	9am	Church open
Tuesday 5 August	9am	Church drop-in
	11am	Holy Communion

Wednesday 6 August	9am	Church open
Friday 8 August	9am	Trip to Thorpe Park for young people age 10+. Contact John Collins for details: john@earleystpeters.org.uk
Sunday 10 August	10am	Parish Communion <i>Readings: Genesis 15.1-6; Hebrews 11.1-3, 8-16; Luke 12.32-40</i>
	6.30pm	Evening Worship <i>Readings: Isaiah 11.10-end of 12; 2 Corinthians 1.1-22</i>
Monday 11 August	9am	Church open
Tuesday 12 August	9am	Church open
	11am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 13 August	9am	Church open
Sunday 17 August	10am	Parish Communion <i>Readings: Jeremiah 23.23-29; Hebrews 11.29-12.2; Luke 12.49-56</i>
	6.30pm	Reflective Communion <i>Readings: 2 Corinthians 8.1-9; Matthew 20.1-16</i>
Monday 18 August	9am	Church open
Tuesday 19 August	9am	Church drop-in
	11am	Holy Communion

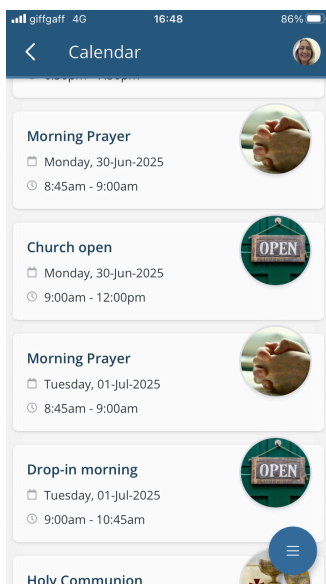
Wednesday 20 August	9am	Church open
Sunday 24 August	10am	Parish Communion <i>Readings: Isaiah 43.8-13; Acts 5.12-16; Luke 22.24-30</i>
	12pm	Baptism of Jaxson Kitcher
	6.30pm	Evening Worship <i>Readings: Isaiah 61.1-9; 2 Corinthians 6.1-10</i>
Tuesday 26 August	9am	Church open
	11am	Holy Communion
	12.30pm	Church hall cleaning afternoon (see below)
Wednesday 27 August	11am	Concert by Reading Concert Band, followed by refreshments and sale of Mama Nunn Preserves in aid of Alexander Devine Children's Hospice. Admission by donation, £5 per head suggested, children free. All net profits to church funds. See the concert poster here: 2025.08.27 Concert.pdf .
Sunday 31 August	10am	Parish Communion <i>Readings: Proverbs 25.6-7; Hebrews 13.1-8, 15-16; Luke 1.7-14</i>
	6.30pm	Evening Worship <i>Readings: Isaiah 33.13-22; John 3.22-36</i>

Choir visit to Chichester Cathedral: We're delighted that our choir will be singing at Chichester Cathedral for Choral Evensong on 2 August and for Choral Matins, Choral Eucharist and Choral Evensong on 3 August.

The list of the music they will be singing can be seen here:

Chichester Cathedral music.pdf The Choral Eucharist will be
livestreamed here: [https://www.chichestercathedral.org.uk/
worship/livestreamed-services](https://www.chichestercathedral.org.uk/worship/livestreamed-services)

**Church hall cleaning afternoon,
26 August, 12.30-4pm:** We'd like to
improve the appearance of our
church hall by tackling some
cleaning jobs that aren't covered by
our regular cleaning schedule, and
we'd like as many volunteers as
possible to help! No working at
height or heavy lifting involved, and
you're welcome to come at any time
during the afternoon for as long as
you wish - no need to stay the whole
time. Plenty of refreshments
available! No need to sign up - just
come along on the day.



My ChurchSuite: We now have a good
number of regular users of My ChurchSuite,
our one-stop app for church emails, calendar,
contact details, rotas and event sign-ups.
Several more people have begun using My
ChurchSuite after receiving support at our
series of drop-in advice sessions in July.
If you were unable to attend a session but
would still like assistance, do get in touch
via admin@earleystpeters.org.uk

Environmental area: Have you seen the wonderful environmental area created in the churchyard by our children and young people? Do take a look - follow the path down the left-hand side of the church. There are some bug hotels already attracting wildlife, and we have great ideas for more features.



Groups for children and young people: There will be no meetings of Tots & Teddies, Children's Church, Inspiration or Questions & Cake in August. We look forward to seeing everybody again in September.



Church clock: You may have noticed that our tower clock has not been working for the last few weeks. Although it is regularly serviced, some parts are beginning to wear out (it has been operating since 1897!). Repairs are taking place, and we hope to see it operating again shortly.

Records of burials in our churchyard: We have undertaken extensive work to update the records of burials in our churchyard. As part of this, we aimed to have the records in a format that can be accessed by the general public. We're pleased to report that these records are now available via our web site [here](#). We hope that this will be a great help to local historians and people researching their family history.



Parking in the church car park during the week: If you attend events in the church or church hall during the week, you may find that the

entrance to the church car park is blocked with cones, especially in the early morning. This is to prevent people parking who are not visiting the church or church hall. If you are arriving for an event in the church or church hall during the week and find the car park entrance blocked, please feel free to move cones in order to gain access. It is helpful if you replace them after you have parked. If you are unable to move cones yourself, please phone ahead to the parish office to ask for assistance.

Pastoral support: Our pastoral team will be happy to hear if you, or anybody you know, would welcome a phone call or visit. Please contact the parish office (0118 966 8575) or Mary Brooke (0118 926 2153)

Food Bank donations: Thank you for all your support to our local food bank with donations of tins, cartons, dried goods with a long shelf life and also personal



hygiene items. Please donate if you are able in the box at the back of church. Our continued support is still very much needed.

More information here: www.woodleyfoodbank.org

Life in all its fullness

These are the most recent details of our upcoming study groups and training sessions. Check our notice boards, social media and website for more details and updates.

Eve in Art: *Led by Richard Miller*

Tuesday 9 September

The session will take place from 1-3pm and will be repeated from 7-9pm.





'Introduction to Matthew's Gospel'

In preparation for the new Church liturgical year (Year A).

Session 1: Saturday 15
November 2-4pm

Session 2: Saturday 22
November 2-4pm

Dates for your diary

13 September, 10am to 6pm: Ride and Stride.

This annual event raises funds for historic churches in Berkshire and for your nominated church through being sponsored to walk run, cycle, drive or ride to as many churches as you wish.

More information here: <https://www.berkschurchestrust.org.uk/ride-and-stride-2/>



21 September, 11am: Macmillan Coffee Morning cake sale in the church hall after the service. All donations very welcome.

Earley St Peter's



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<https://www.earleystpeters.org.uk/>

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