
Your monthly update from Earley St Peter's church: January 2026

1 message

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**Your Monthly Update from Earley St Peter's – January
2026****Thought for the month** from the Revd Kate Wakeman-Toogood

I wonder how many of us will begin 2026 with New Year's Resolutions. Of those resolutions, I wonder how many of them are realistic enough to keep, and how many are promises we are making to ourselves which are unrealistic and will lead us to unnecessary and unhelpful feelings of failure and frustration. We've all been there!

Whilst I have personal new year's resolutions, one thing that I am determined to do as a vicar is to be braver and bolder in addressing some of the more difficult issues that it is in our human nature to avoid or postpone. For those of you who hadn't guessed it, the main thing I am talking about is money!

Last year we had a generous giving campaign and we were delighted to see some positive effects. Regular monthly giving increased and we are immensely grateful to everybody who did respond to the campaign in this way. However, for a variety of other reasons we lost income last year and so the reality is that we need to reclaim momentum with regards to giving, and ensure that these generous giving campaigns happen regularly.

I am writing this at the start of a new year because it would also be a good opportunity for people to revisit the literature that we shared last year, particularly about the significant deficit that we faced. This year we are projected a similarly large deficit. Whilst fundraising and gift days are useful, it is regular giving that will make the difference, particularly as the cost of running the church and the hall has increased **and** we are increasingly offering more services, groups, and events. Our approach to generous giving is a marathon rather than a sprint.

Reading back through the last couple of paragraphs, I do feel it is a bold move talking about money and giving at the start of a new year, particularly as many of us feel the financial pinch after Christmas. But I am not asking people to empty their wallets, but rather to think about our attitude towards giving - and I include myself in that - and how we can work together to serve God and our community, and resource at Church so that each member can flourish.

I want to end this reflection by launching 'Life in all its fullness 2026', which was something I started last year and will continue due to its success. As you may remember, part of this is pulling together the many different things we already do and advertising the programme of learning and training opportunities for the year ahead. Please keep an eye out on our notice boards, website and social media for the 'Life in all its fullness 2026' posters at the start of January.

With prayers and all best wishes for a blessed 2026. *Kate.*

Services and Events in January

(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 4 January	8am	Holy Communion
	10am	Parish Communion for Epiphany
	6.30pm	Evening Worship Questions & Cake
Monday 5 January	9am	Church open
	2pm	Sunshine Social
Tuesday 6 January	9am	Drop-in morning
	9am	Pop-up cafe for first day of term: all welcome after school drop-off
	11am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 7 January	10.15am	Tots & Teddies
Friday 9 January	9.30am	Church cleaning

Sunday 11 January	10am	Parish Communion Children's Church Inspiration Group
	6.30pm	Choral Evensong
Monday 12 January	9am	Church open
Tuesday 13 January	9am	Church open
	11am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 14 January	9am	Church open
	10.15am	Tots & Teddies
Sunday 18 January	10am	Parish Communion Children's Church Inspiration Group
	12pm	Baptism of Leya and Luke Masson
	6.30pm	Reflective Communion Questions & Cake
Monday 19 January	9am	Church open

Tuesday 20 January	9am	Church open
	11am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 21 January	9am	Church open
	10.15am	Tots & Teddies
Saturday 24 January	6pm	International Food Evening (see below)
Sunday 25 January	10am	Parish Communion Children's Church
	4pm	Messy Church
	6.30pm	Choral Evensong
Monday 26 January	9am	Church open
Tuesday 27 January	9am	Church open
	11am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 28 January	9am	Church open
	10.15am	Tots & Teddies

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity runs from Sunday 18 - Sunday 25 January and this year's theme is based on Ephesians 4: There is one Body and one Spirit. As we did last year, we will be providing a simple booklet of prayers and reflections which you can pick up in church on Sunday 18 January.

International food and fellowship evening

On Saturday 24 January we are delighted to be holding a special event to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Hospitality is one thing that unites people across different cultures and backgrounds, and this evening will be a chance to enjoy food from various countries and to spend time with one another. There will also be a fun quiz to do on your tables and a short act of worship to begin the evening, based on the theme of the week.

The suggested donation is £5 but we appreciate not everyone will be able to afford this. More details will be announced in church, weekly bulletins and posters in early January.

Lent Group 2026 - A Journey Through Lent: There will be a Lent group running on Tuesdays from 7.30pm until 9.00pm throughout the Lenten period. It will begin on Tuesday 24 February and conclude on Tuesday 31 March. A warm invitation to participate is extended to you. The course will be looking at what Lent means to us, alongside the period of wilderness that Christ experienced during the 40 days spent in the desert. The sessions will be based on the spirituality of St. Ignatius, and will include imaginative contemplation of scriptural passages, as well as other practical aids to assist in this study period. There will be group discussion and quiet time built into each session.

More information about this group, and in particular the spirituality of St. Ignatius, will be published in the February



newsletter. This group will be led by choir member Martin Lijinsky. Please contact him if you have any questions: martin.lijinsky@gmail.com

New log-in option for ChurchSuite and My ChurchSuite: You can now log into ChurchSuite (authorised users) and My ChurchSuite (open to all) from the link in the footer on every page of our web site: <https://www.earleystpeters.org.uk/>. My ChurchSuite gives access to rotas, church emails, the calendar and contact information, and is an easy way to sign up for and track events. If you haven't taken a look yet and would like to do so, please contact admin@earleystpeters.org.uk



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 of office (0118 966 8575) or Mary Brooke (0118 926 2153)

Good News from Woodley Food Bank donations: They have a new cabin donated and delivered by Balfour Beatty to replace their old one which was showing signs of its age. Much better working conditions for their volunteers. Despite the huge amount of donations at Harvest Festival, all stocks are now low (except pasta), so they would be very grateful for our continued support as we enter the Winter months 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 the church. Finally, a massive thank you. Every last item donated is very much appreciated as they continue to provide to those who need it within our community. *Anne and Ken Richardson*



More information here: www.woodleyfoodbank.org

Life in all its fullness

Information for 2026 coming soon! Check our notice boards, social media and website for more details and updates.

Dates for your diary

13 February 2026, 9.30am, Big Church Spring Clean: We invite as many people as possible to join our regular cleaning team for a one-off more extensive clean. All materials provided, no heavy lifting involved.

28 February 2026, 3pm: Concert by Cantemus Chamber Choir in aid of Earley St Peter's and Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service.

6 June 2026, 7pm: Concert by Erleigh Cantors in aid of Earley St Peter's and Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service. This will also feature our Song School with their own solo pieces and joint items with Mary Westley and Cantemus.

Earley St Peter's



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