

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

1 message

Mary Frank <earleystpeters@mg.churchsuite.com>
 Reply-To: Mary Frank <admin@earleystpeters.org.uk>
 To: admin@earleystpeters.org.uk

3 September 2026 at 09:29



Your Monthly Update from Earley St Peter's – September 2026

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

Last month, I celebrated my 22-year wedding anniversary, not with a traditional romantic meal, but with a trip to the cinema to watch *Spider-Man: Brand New Day!* I confess that this was actually the second time I had seen it, having watched it on its opening night with my whole family! You don't have to know me for very long before you discover I am a huge fan of superheroes. My favourite is almost certainly Iron Man, although I like many different superheroes, with differing powers, skills and backstories. Even within the world of superheroes, there is no 'one size fits all' and often their lives, albeit fictional, are complex and reflect struggles that are relatable – even to us mere humans.

These heroes are not limited to the Marvel Cinematic Universe and, as I write this reflection, I am preparing to host a 'Padre's evening' on the theme of superheroes with our local cadet squadron, where I am their chaplain. Planning the material for the group inspired me to think more widely about qualities of heroism and subsequently inspired this reflection.

The shape of the cadet session will start with traditional superheroes, often with capes or enhanced powers, and then look at their qualities. Not just their powers but their human qualities, and I suspect the young people will talk about bravery, standing up to injustice and bringing about change, amongst other things. I will then ask them to look at some important people throughout history who didn't have special powers or bright coloured outfits with capes, but people who made significant differences to the lives of others. They will have showed many of the same qualities of heroism.

I am then going to ask the young people to consider who they see as a hero in their everyday life – and this is where I want to extend the question to those reading this reflection. Who is your hero? They could be living or someone who has died. They could be someone you have met or someone you have heard

about, or read about. They could be recent or from further back in history. Whose contribution to the life of our world inspires you with awe?

The Bible is full of people who have demonstrated these heroic qualities. Not people who are perfect but often individuals who are flawed, in the same way we are flawed in our humanness and, indeed, as are most of the comic book heroes. Humans who despite their skills and abilities, their good intentions and honourable motives, don't always find it easy and don't always get it right. But with the biblical heroes, it is in God's strength that they carried out their tasks, spread the good news and made a difference to the lives of the people they encountered.

So I will end with this question: who would your biblical hero be? Jesus is the obvious answer (without sin and the embodiment of God's love) so I think we all challenge ourselves to choose someone other than Jesus! Think outside the box; who shows courage or perseverance? Selflessness or commitment? Leadership or teamwork? And if you feel inspired, do send me an email and let me know who you chose! *Kate*

Services and Events in September

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

We meet every weekday morning at 8.55am (Fridays at 8.30am) in the church for Morning Prayer. All welcome.

Wednesday 1 September	9am	Church open
Saturday 5 September	10am-3pm	Church open
Sunday 6 September	8am	Holy Communion
	10am	Bread and Wine
	6.30pm	Evening Worship Questions and Cake
Monday 7 September	9am	Church open
	2pm	Sunshine Social
Tuesday 8 September	9am	Church open
	11am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 9 September	9am	Church open
	10.15am	Tots and Teddies
	7pm	PCC

Thursday 10 September	10am	Thursday@10: coffee and chat
Friday 11 September	9.30am	Church cleaning
	10.30am	Compassion Cafe
Saturday 12 September	10am-3pm	Church open
Sunday 13 September	10am	Parish Communion Children's Church Inspiration Group
	6.30pm	Choral Evensong
Monday 14 September	9am	Church open
Tuesday 15 September	9am	Church open
	11am	Holy Communion
	12pm	Holy Communion at The Birches
Wednesday 16 September	9am	Church open
	10.15am	Tots and Teddies
Saturday 19 September	10am-3pm	Church open
	10am	Parish Prayer Walk
Sunday 20 September	10am	Parish Communion Children's Church Inspiration Group
	11am	Macmillan Coffee Morning

	6.30pm	Reflective Communion Questions and Cake
Monday 21 September	9am	Church open
Tuesday 22 September	9am	Church open
	11am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 23 September	9am	Church open
	10.15am	Tots and Teddies
	11.30am	Holy Communion at Embrook Court
Thursday 24 September	10am	Thursday@10: Emma Evans, 'Adventure in Peru'
Saturday 26 September	10am-3pm	Church open
Sunday 27 September	10am	Parish Communion Children's Church
	4pm	Messy Church
	6.30pm	Choral Evensong
Monday 28 September	9am	Church open
Tuesday 29 September	9am	Church open
	11am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 30 September	9am	Church open

	10.15am	Tots and Teddies

11 September, 10.30am: Compassion cafe. We all know that grief is something which affects many people in different ways, and it can be a lonely experience. In September we are starting a new group called the Compassion Cafe, which is a drop-in group held on the second Friday of each month from 10.30pm-12pm, beginning on 11 September.

20 September, 11am: Macmillan Coffee Morning. Please do join us after the service for our annual Macmillan Coffee Morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support.

Volunteers needed for Sunday refreshments

Gillian and her team work very hard to offer refreshments on Sundays after the main morning service and we are all very grateful for their commitment. Unfortunately, due to unexpected circumstances, the team could benefit from some new volunteers joining them. Hospitality is an important part of the life of St Peter's and the Sunday team are often the people who serve drinks to visitors or people who are new to the parish. If you are interested or have any queries, please email Gillian Gatehouse at gillygate@talktalk.net

A message from Bridget Green: A total of eight individuals from Earley St Peter's kindly donated to the appeal for funds for the tailoring project for Nikolaus' mother. We only have Gift Aid forms for two of these people. Please can any donors who are UK Taxpayers complete this Gift Aid form

[Gift Aid Form 2022.doc](#) and return it to me, either by post or electronically to bridgetg@talktalk.net.

Generous Giving Update

I have spoken twice in church recently about our financial situation, something that our Treasurer Helen also spoke about at the APCM. With a large predicted deficit this year, we are faced with the reality that our income needs to increase significantly. Whilst we benefit from some generous one-off gifts and fundraising events, an increase in regular giving is what we most need.

Last year we did a full generous giving campaign, and we will do another one next year, but this year I have looked at some figures and want to present some hard facts (and we all know how much I love numbers!)

If 70 people gave £10 extra each month, our annual income would increase by £8400.

If 70 people gave £5 extra each week, our annual income would increase by £18200. That is significant percentage of the predicted deficit!

The reason I like these figures is that £5 a week is roughly the cost of a takeaway coffee and so it is something we can relate to.

Of course some people cannot afford to increase their giving this much but others may be able to increase theirs more – we all know our own financial situations. What I would ask is that people remember that whilst wages have increased nationally, as well as a large increase in heating costs, food prices and other aspects of daily life, these have all increased in our church too.

There are leaflets at the back of church and a 'giving' section on the notice board showing the different ways people can give. You can use a standing order, which is easy to set up and amend, or pay through the parish giving scheme.

If you want to talk about any of this or ask any questions, please do email me. A couple of people have asked me questions in the last couple of weeks and I have had some honest and useful conversations.

Thank you for reading this – no vicar wants to talk about money constantly but I also see how much growth and activity there is at St Peter's and whilst I long for this to continue, the truth is that most of it has a financial implication and we need to be able to resource it. *Kate*

Parish Prayer Walks

Kajsa has developed Parish Prayer Walks – 1-10km walks around the parish with prayer stations and set prayers that may (or may not) be used. You will find the links to download maps on the flyer outside the hall or in church, and paper copies of the maps are to be found in the green folder in the church's library corner. We will do a joint walk (most likely the University walk) on the third Saturday of the month, at 10am, meeting by the church. The walk will be followed by a coffee/tea and biscuits in the church. Toilets and parking are available at the church hall.

Sunday 4 October is St Francis' day and 2026 marks the 800th anniversary of his death. It is an important day in the parish for a number of reasons.

End of Creationtide

St Francis' Day marks the end of Creationtide, the church season which begins on 1 September. As a parish, this is our second year of celebrating this season, where we focus on God's creation in a variety of ways, reflected in our readings, preaching and prayers.

Harvest Festival

In place of our usual Bread and Wine service, our 10am service on Sunday 4 October will be an all-age harvest celebration service, followed by a bring and share meal. Please look out for detailed notices about this in the weekly bulletins throughout September.

Pet blessing service

Yes, you read that correctly! At 4pm on Sunday 4 October, we are holding a pet blessing service in church to mark the 800 year anniversary of St Francis, patron saint of animals. Again, further details will follow but it would be wonderful if people could support this service. You do not need to bring a pet in order to attend and we ask that any pets be kept secure, whether that be on a lead or in a cage. The service will be around half an hour in order to reduce potential animal related chaos!! I am bringing one of my many pets and I am hoping it will be good fun, as well as a chance to thank God for the many animals in creation and remember St Francis.

Confirmation service

There will be a confirmation service at St Peter's on Sunday 11 October at 6pm. We are delighted that Bishop Mary will be joining us again to lead this service. There will be candidates from a couple of other churches in the deanery and it will be a service of great celebration.

We will be running confirmation classes for adults and young people. The original deadline for signing up was in August, but there is space in the group for additional candidates if anyone has since decided that they would like to be confirmed this year. **You must let Kate know by Sunday 6 September** as she will need to prepare resources. **Young people can be confirmed from Year 6 upwards.** A previous email said Year 7, as we were concerned about group size at that stage.

Confirmation classes will be held on the following dates, venue tbc:

Monday 7 September, 6-7.15pm

Monday 14 September, 6-7.15pm

Wednesday 23 September, 6-7.15pm

Monday 28 September, 6-7.15pm

Monday 5 October, 6-8pm (this includes a rehearsal in church and there will be a short refreshment break in the middle of the session).

It is important that candidates attend all sessions as they each cover different material. However, if there is just one session you cannot attend, there will be a catch-up class on Wednesday 30 September where a couple of the ministry team can go over any missed material.

Admission of younger children to Holy Communion: if your child is younger and would like to be admitted to Holy Communion, please contact Kate. Children aged 6 or 7 upwards can join the group, providing they attend two half-hour sessions. This will be an introduction to Communion using age-appropriate resources. The times and dates of these sessions are to be decided, as we can be flexible with these and are waiting to see who is interested. Again, the original deadline was in August, but if you **let Kate know by 11 September** then we can add to the group.

Learning Hub

"The books transported her into new worlds..." (Matilda)

Learning is something we do throughout our lives and as Christians there is always more to learn, about God, the Bible and the Church. Study courses are great but sometimes it is good to learn at our own pace, and Oxford Diocese have a great platform for this called the Learning Hub.

It is free to create an account and then you can access a range of courses, including some short 'bite size' courses which can be completed in just a couple of hours at your own pace (and you can spread the time over a few days or weeks).

Please read this file **Learning hub.docx** which is a poster I have made showing you how to create your account and which courses might be a good starting point. If you'd like to chat about any of the courses or need help signing up then please do email me. *Kate*

Support for Anthan: Anthan served as a Catholic priest in Pakistan for 17 years but due to a series of challenging circumstances, Anthan came to the UK nearly two years ago. Since then he has become a regular congregation member at St Peter's on Sundays and Tuesdays. He was formally admitted into the Church of England in June and he was recently appointed as the new caretaker for the church hall.

Anthan is currently in accommodation that is safe and comfortable but it is a temporary arrangement and he is seeking new accommodation in the near future.

We are asking whether anyone would be able to offer Anthan a longer-term room to stay in while his appeal to stay permanently in the UK is being processed. His part-time wage and the government allowance he receives mean he is not able to pay a large amount of rent but he would have enough money to contribute towards food and some household costs.

Please could I encourage everyone to pray that accommodation is found for Anthan that is close enough to church that he can continue to work and attend regularly. *Kate*

Hand-made stall for the Christmas Fayre – it's time for action!

The Christmas Fayre notices have been out for a couple of months now, but as

we enter Autumn, we are starting to make more solid plans.

If you feel you can contribute to the Hand-made stall (the original advertisement is below), please do let Kate know as soon as possible. It would be helpful if you could let us know what you are making and how much you would like to charge for the items.

So far, the contributions we have had are to be sold with all the profit going to the church. However, if you would like to sell your items with the profit split between the church and somewhere else, please do indicate this in your email.

Unfortunately, we do not have the capacity for any small business sellers due to space restrictions.

'Are you crafty? Can you knit or crochet? Do you work with wood or clay? At our Christmas Fayre, we are having a 'Hand-made' stall which will hopefully contain a wide variety of items. Some ideas so far are hats, scarves, Christmas tree decorations and jewellery, but we know that people are very creative and we would welcome a range of items to sell. We ask that most items are £10 or below and small enough to be taken home on the day. However, if you have any suggestions for larger or more expensive items, please speak to Kate as this might be possible. Rachel Knight will be overseeing this stall. If you would like to contribute to this stall, please email Kate or come to the next meeting. We also ask that we don't have home-made Christmas cards contributed as Kajsa is designing some specifically for the church to sell from November onwards, and they will have their own small stall at the fayre.'

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)

Woodley 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 the ever important personal hygiene items. Please donate if you are able in the box at the back of the church. Our continued support is still very much needed. *Anne and Ken Richardson* More information here: www.woodleyfoodbank.org

Mission Focus

Jesus' mission to His followers includes compassion and service: responding to human need through charity, medical care, education, and social support. Here at St Peter's we do this in so many ways.

Most of us know about our PCC support and other fundraising activities for Anna Sims' mission work in Peru, for the Care Ministry work in Shinyanga, and for REInspired here in Berkshire. But as a parish and as individuals we also support Woodley Foodbank, Alexander Devine Hospice and other local, national and international care mission work.

Our new Mission Focus is going to be bringing you news about our support for mission each month. We are also setting up a Mission group to support all our mission work. If you feel that supporting this aspect of Christ's mission is your calling please contact the church office or Catherine Rawcliffe (catmrawcliffe@gmail.com)

And hold 18 October in your diary, as we have a fun fundraiser planned for then – more about that next month!

Life in all its fullness

There are exciting social, training and study events coming this year. We look forward to welcoming everyone. Check the dates below and sign up, either via My ChurchSuite or by contacting the parish office. More dates are likely to be added, so check the church calendar and newsletters for latest information.

7 November: Training - Neurodiversity Awareness

28 November: Study - Gospel of Mark

11 December: Social - Christmas Fayre

Dates for your diary

3 October: Theatre trip

4 October, 10am: Harvest Festival, followed by shared lunch

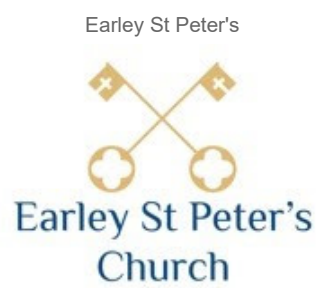
4 October, 4pm: Pet Blessing service for St Francis' Day

11 October, 6pm: Confirmation Service

18 October: Fundraiser

1 November, 3pm: All Souls' service

11 December, 3pm: Christmas Fayre



Church Road

Earley

RG6 1EY

0118 966 8575

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

You received this email because you have opted in to receive general emails from Earley St Peter's.

[Manage communication](#) or [Unsubscribe](#)