

## **Your Monthly Update from Earley St Peter's – March 2025**

### **Thought for the Month** *from the Revd Kate Wakeman-Toogood*

March is an interesting month of the year for me because it holds many memories, some better than others. I'm sure that we all have months of the year that feel more momentous than others, whether that is due to good memories, bad memories, or, as in my case, a mixture of both. It was a number of years ago, when I was having a very difficult March, that I became acutely aware of the changes that come at this time of year, particularly the arrival of spring. All these years later, these are things that I notice afresh every year. During my difficult March, I did a lot more walking than I had ever done before, to clear my head and distract myself. One of these walks each day was almost always in the early evening and so it became obvious when the days were growing longer, most notably when it was light at the start of my walk, rather than in the dark or dusk. We all know that the nighttime can heighten feelings, whether that be loneliness, grief, sadness or anxiety. For me, there was a renewed sense of hope when I was walking in was light, and also knowing that the night time would not be so long. There were also changes in nature, signs of new life, which again, brought much needed hope.

As well as the physical nighttime that we all experience at the end of each day, it can also be a helpful analogy. All of us will have periods in our lives that can feel a bit like a nighttime and the dawn can feel far away. Like the night, these periods in our lives can be lonely. particularly if everyone else seems to be peaceful around us. It can feel frightening, the darkness can be overwhelming and we may long for light, which so often represents hope.

Much of Lent falls in March and so I wanted to use this reflection to encourage us all to notice where there is hope. It could be in the new life we see in the world around us as Spring arrives. But we also find this hope in our faith as we journey through Lent towards Holy Week, to the darkest day on Good Friday, yet with the ultimate hope that comes with the resurrection. Even on the darkest night, dawn will come, and this is the hope we can hold on to as we go through the ups and downs, and the changing seasons of life.

### **Life in all its fullness**

These are the most recent details of our upcoming study groups and training sessions. This will not be posted in every monthly bulletin, but please do check our notice boards, social media and website for more details and updates.

#### ***Life in all its fullness: developing as a community***

- March 8th - Active Listening Skills (This has been RESCHEDULED to the Autumn)
- March 15th - Fire Safety Training
- March 29th - Neurodiversity Awareness Training
- April 5th - First Aid Training
- April 12th - Safeguarding Training: Foundation level. 9am-12pm

*Please note: You must have completed the Basic level training in order to do this. Priority will be given to those for whom this level is mandatory due to their role*

- May 3rd - 'Leading Prayers of Intercession' workshop
- June 28th - Messy Church Leader Training
- July 12th - Holiday Club Leader Training (speak to John for more details)
- 6th September - Being Mental Health Aware

All sessions will be from 2-4pm in the church hall (Winch room), unless specified otherwise. Please note, some of these courses will have a limited capacity.

## ***Life in all its fullness: learning and growing***

### **Lent 2025**

- **Journeying through Lent with Luke: A short service with reflection/discussion.**  
Tuesdays in Lent (11th March – 8th April): 11am-12pm and 7.30-8.30pm in church.
- **Holy Week and Easter in Art: Led by Richard Miller**  
Three sessions looking at how, over many years, art has told the story of Jesus' Passion, Death and Resurrection.
  - Session 1: Monday 31st March 1.30-3pm and Wednesday 2nd April
  - Session 2: Monday 7th April and Thursday 10th April
  - Session 3: Monday 14th April and Wednesday 16th April

### **Confirmation Preparation Classes for Adults 7-8pm in the Fowler Room (separate classes for adults and young people aged 11-17)**

Wednesday 2nd April

Wednesday 9th April

Thursday 24th April

Wednesday 30th April

Monday 12th May

Saturday 17th May 1-2.30pm in Church for a final session, rehearsal and refreshments, finishing with a prayer activity.

*The Confirmation service will take place on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May and will be conducted by the new Bishop of Reading.*

### **Who's who in the Old Testament?**

*Following on from our Women in the Bible sessions last year, this course looks in more detail at some more Biblical figures.*

- Melchizedek: Tuesday 3rd June (7-8.30pm) and Thursday 5th June (12.30-2pm)
- Elijah: Tuesday 17th June (7-8.30pm) and Thursday 19th June (12.30-2pm)
- TBC: Tuesday 8th July (7-8.30pm) and Thursday 10th July (12.30-2pm)
- TBC: Tuesday 15th July (7-8.30pm) and Friday 17th July (12.30-2pm)

### **Eve in Art: Led by Richard Miller**

Tuesday 9th 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 15th November 2-4pm

Session 2: Saturday 22nd November 2-4pm

## Services and Events in March

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

Sunday 2nd March	8am	Holy Communion <i>Readings: 2 Corinthians 3.12-4.2; Luke 9.28-36</i>
	10am	Bread & Wine <i>Reading: Luke 9.28-36</i>
	6.30pm	Evening Worship <i>Readings: Exodus 3.1-6; John 12.27-36a</i> Questions and Cake
Monday 3rd March	9am	Church open
Tuesday 4th March	9am	Church drop-in
	11am	Midweek Communion
	12.30pm	Board Games and Chat
Wednesday 5th March	9am	Church open
	10.15am	Tots and Teddies
	11am	Ash Wednesday service at St Nicolas church led by Kate
	7.30pm	Ash Wednesday service
Sunday 9th March	10am	Parish Communion <i>Readings: Deuteronomy 26.1-11; Romans 10.8b-13; Luke 4.1-13</i> Children's Church Inspiration Group
Blue Coat School (see below)	6.30pm	Choral Evensong with Song School: joint service with Reading <i>Readings: Jonah 3; Luke 18.9-14</i>
Monday 10th March	9am	Church open
Tuesday 11th March	9am	Church drop-in
	11am	Journeying through Lent with Luke: service and discussion group
	7.30pm	Journeying through Lent with Luke: service and discussion group
Wednesday 12th March	9am	Church open
	10.15am	Tots & Teddies
Thursday 13th March	10am	Thursday@10: Coffee and chat
Friday 14th March	9.30am	Church cleaning
Saturday 15th March	2pm	Training: Fire Awareness
Sunday 16th March	10am	Parish Communion <i>Readings: Genesis 15.1-12, 17-18; Philippians 3.17-4.1; Luke 13.31-end</i> Children's Church
	6.30pm	Reflective Communion <i>Reading: Luke 14.27-33</i> Questions and Cake
Monday 17th March	9am	Church open

	7.30pm	PCC
Tuesday 18th March	9am	Church drop-in
	11am	Journeying through Lent with Luke: service and discussion group
	7.30pm	Journeying through Lent with Luke: service and discussion group
Wednesday 19th March	9am	Church open
	10.15am	Tots & Teddies
Sunday 23rd March	10am	Parish Communion <i>Readings: Isaiah 55.1-9; 1 Corinthians 10.1-13; Luke 13.1-9</i>
		Children's Church Inspiration Group
	11am	My ChurchSuite helpdesk (see below)
	6.30pm	Choral Evensong <i>Readings: Genesis 28.10-19a; John 1.35-end</i>
Monday 24th March	9am	Church open
Tuesday 25th March	9am	Church drop-in
	11am	Journeying through Lent with Luke: service and discussion group
	7.30pm	Journeying through Lent with Luke: service and discussion group
Wednesday 26th March	9am	Church open
	10.15am	Tots & Teddies
Thursday 27th March College"	10am	Thursday@10: Ann Munday: "My experiences teaching at Carmel
Saturday 29th March	2pm	Training: Neurodiversity
Sunday 30th March	10am	Parish Communion <i>Readings: Exodus 2.1-10; 2 Corinthians 1.3-7; Luke 2.33-35</i>
		Children's Church
	6.30pm	Mothering Sunday can be a day of great joy and celebration, but it is also a day that many women and men find difficult, for a wide variety of reasons. Our 6.30pm service today will be a special reflective communion where there will be space for lighting candles, reflection and will offer an opportunity for all who find the day painful or challenging, to spend time with God.
Monday 31st March	1.30pm	Study: Holy Week and Easter in Art (Session 1) (see below)

**Joint evensong with Reading Blue Coat School Chamber Choir, 9th March at 6.30pm:** This service will be in celebration of International Women's Day and will feature music by female composers, including the first performance of a Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis by Diana Owen. The other composers featured will be Joanna Forbes L'Estrange, Amy Beach, Lucy Walker and Undine Smith Moore.

**Electoral Roll revision:** We are required to undertake a full revision of the Electoral Roll before the Annual Meetings on 11th May. This means that everybody who is on the current Electoral Roll will be taken off and will have to re-apply to be listed on the new Electoral Roll. **Nobody will be automatically added to the new Electoral Roll, so you must apply if you want to be on it.** You can apply by:

- filling in the form on paper: the form is available at the back of church and you can return the form to the Electoral Roll folder there.
- filling in the form online at this link: <https://earleystpeters.churchsuite.com/forms/lpxfmsqn> - link also in the email to which this newsletter is attached.
- filling in the form by scanning this QR code:



Please check when filling in the form that you are eligible to be on the Electoral Roll. People who are not on the current Electoral Roll are welcome to apply to be listed on the new one if they meet the criteria given on the form. **The deadline for applications is 17th April 2025.** If you have any questions, please speak to Niran Perera, our Electoral Roll Officer.

**My ChurchSuite:** Lots of people have now logged into My ChurchSuite and are enjoying exploring what it offers, including church emails, rotas, contact details and information about events. If you haven't already logged in, do take a look! If you didn't receive log-in details, or would like a reminder of how to log in, please contact [admin@earleystpeters.org.uk](mailto:admin@earleystpeters.org.uk). If you need support with accessing or using My ChurchSuite, there will be another helpdesk session after the morning service on 23rd March.

**The Art of Easter – images for Lent:** There will be three sessions in the church hall to help us prepare for Easter:

Mondays 31st March, 7th April, 14th April – 1.30-3pm

Wednesday 2nd April, 7-8.30pm

Thursday 10th April, 7-8.30pm

Wednesday 16th April, 7-8.30pm

In these sessions, Richard Miller will talk about the Journey of Jesus through Holy Week as portrayed in religious art, and will include the arrival in Jerusalem, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, the trial, crucifixion and resurrection. Come to some, or come to all, afternoons or evenings! Join us to find meaning and inspiration! No need to book, but you may wish to sign up via ChurchSuite so that the dates are saved for you and easy to see.

**Confirmation course and service:** It has now been confirmed that Bishop Mary, the new bishop of Reading, will be taking the confirmation service on 18th May. We already have the names of a number of people who would like to be confirmed but it isn't too late to add your name. Could you email Kate if you are an adult wanting to be confirmed, and John if the candidate is a child (school year 6 and upwards).

**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 9668575) 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](http://www.woodleyfoodbank.org)

### **Dates for your diary**

1st April, 11am or 7.30pm (morning session repeated in the evening): Study course: Journeying through Lent with Luke 4 (service and discussion group)

2nd April, 7pm: Study - Holy Week and Easter in Art (Session 1)

5th April, 2pm: Training - First Aid

7th April, 1.30pm: Study - Holy Week and Easter in Art (Session 2)  
8th April, 11am or 7.30pm (morning session repeated in the evening): Study course: Journeying through Lent with Luke 5 (service and discussion group)  
10th April, 7pm: Study - Holy Week and Easter in Art (Session 2)  
14th April, 1.30pm: Study - Holy Week and Easter in Art (Session 3)  
7.30pm: Holy Communion  
15th April, 11am: Holy Communion  
16th April, 11am: Holy Communion  
7pm: Study - Holy Week and Easter in Art (Session 3)  
17th April, 7.30pm: Holy Communion for Maundy Thursday with Song School  
18th April, 10.45am: Good Friday activities  
12pm All-Age Service  
2pm Last Hour  
19th April, 7.30pm: Easter Vigil  
20th April, 10am: Communion for Easter Day with Song School  
6.30pm: Festal Evensong