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

1 message

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



Thought for the month *from the Revd Kajsa-Stina Longuère*

What do deacons do?

This is a reflection on what it is to be a deacon, with genuine examples of lived in-action experience and constant pondering from your deacon.

OK, I added 'in action' for a bit of drama, but honestly, being a deacon is to be in constant action as it turns out, so it's fully justified.

If you ever run out of things to read, there is always the Ordinal and the liturgy for ordination services. The bit for deacons says that we are called to work with the Bishop (Mary and Steven) and Priest (Kate) as heralds of Christ's kingdom. Fortunately, that means proclaiming the gospel in

word and deed and being an agent of God's purposes of love, rather than wearing medieval bubble-shorts and blowing a trumpet.

We are to serve the community and report back any needs or hopes that the church can act upon (such as the Pop-up Café and Sunshine Social), and we are to work with others to find the poor and weak, sick and lonely, and anyone who is powerless and oppressed, and reach out to the forgotten corners of the world to make God's love visible. It is a pastoral ministry, and very in-action as we help those searching for faith and bring them to baptism, assist in the administration of the sacraments (check out what I do at the high altar during communion), distribute communion, and minister to the sick and housebound. (Do please let me know if you are sick or housebound and want a visit, I'd be delighted to pop by.)

We seek our own nourishment through the Scriptures, that we study with you all so that the whole church is equipped to live out the gospel in the world. We pray faithfully and look out for signs of God's presence as he reveals the Kingdom among us. All of that, and so much more! Basically, deacons are concerned with all the earthy stuff – and God's presence on earth through Jesus Christ. That is one reason for my many hours spent producing the Love Molecule (if you haven't seen it, there is a 3D sculpture of Oxytocin - the Love hormone) between two of the pillars in the north transept.

The Ordinal and the whole idea of deacons is based on the Bible and operations of the early Church. As the disciples worked their way through new lands and their activities grew, they commissioned seven others, including Stephen and Philip, to be disciples in the Diaspora and among the Gentiles. Acts 6:1-6 tells more about this, and though it says that the disciples found themselves too busy to wait on tables and wanted someone else to do it, it is a typical method by which Luke (who probably wrote The Acts of the Apostles) used authority over material possessions as a symbol for spiritual authority. The transfer of spiritual power is symbolised by taking on table service, as Jesus did for the twelve. (I am very happy to serve at tables too obviously, especially if it helps you connect with faith!)

Acts 6:8 onwards through Acts 7 offers a glimpse into the life of Stephen, who did wonders and signs among the people, though not universally loved (obviously I remain hopeful for a better end than poor Stephen's!) Philip in Acts 8:5 preached in Samaria, which gives an idea of how deacons have an evangelical role, and Paul writes to the Romans (16:1)

of Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae, who was useful to him and to many. Timothy writes a detailed list of the qualifications of deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13) – by which I ought not to be double-tongued, drink too much, or be greedy. I ought to be serious, temperate, and faithful, and only marry once, and keep my household and children in good order. Well, I do have a complicated relationship with Timothy. My children are relatively ordered, but the household - and being serious? It's not in the Ordinal!



As it happens, I am very fond of Phoebe, and here's a little icon I wrote. She is one of few women mentioned in Scripture with some form of leadership position, and the only one bearing the title 'deacon' – *diakonos* in Greek. It doesn't mean that there weren't any other women obviously, it just means that they weren't mentioned –

and there is a long list of reasons as to why that probably was, which can become another article for another newsletter. If you are interested in Biblical women, visible and invisible, Joan Taylor and Helen Bond's *Women Remembered: Jesus' Female Disciples* (Hodder & Stoughton) is very good.

When I grow up into a 'real vicar' next year, I will still be a deacon for life. All bishops and priests became deacons first, and it isn't something that you graduate from. We care for you and our communities in a very in-action and pastoral way, always.

Services and Events in October

(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.

Wednesday 1 October	9am	Church open
	10.15am	Tots & Teddies
Saturday 4 October	11am	Holy Communion for Feast of St Francis and end of Creationtide
Sunday 5 October	8am	Holy Communion <i>Readings: Philippians 4.4-9; John 6.25-35</i>
	10am	Harvest Festival with Song School <i>Reading: John 6.25-35</i>
	11.45am	Bring and Share lunch (see below)
	6.30pm	Evening Worship <i>Readings: Nehemiah 5.1-13; John 9</i> Questions and Cake
	8.15pm	ESP Connect: 18-25s social
Monday 6 October	9am	Church open
Tuesday 7 October	9am	Drop-in morning
	11am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 8 October	9am	Church open
	10.15am	Tots & Teddies
Thursday 9 October	10am	Thursday@10: Coffee and Chat

Friday 10 October	9.30am	Church cleaning
Saturday 11 October	3pm	Training: Dementia Friend (see below)
Sunday 12 October	10am	Parish Communion <i>Readings: 2 Kings 5.1-3, 7-15c; 2 Timothy 2.8-15; Luke 17.11-19</i> Children's Church Inspiration Group
	6.30pm	Choral Evensong with Song School and Reading Blue Coat School <i>Readings: Nehemiah 6.1-16; John 15.12-end</i>
Monday 13 October	9am	Church open
Tuesday 14 October	9am	Church open
	11am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 15 October	9am	Church open
	10.15am	Tots & Teddies
	1pm	Training: Safeguarding (Foundation level)
Sunday 19 October	10am	Parish Communion <i>Readings: Genesis 32.22-31; 2 Timothy 3.14-4.5; Luke 18.1-8</i> Baptism of Orla Harkins

		Children's Church Inspiration Group
	12pm	Baptism of Verity Miller
	6.30pm	Reflective Communion <i>Readings: Nehemiah 8.9-end; John 16.1-11</i> Questions and Cake
Monday 20 October	9am	Church open
Tuesday 21 October	9am	Church open
	11am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 22 October	9am	Church open
	10.15am	Tots & Teddies
Thursday 23 October	10am	Thursday@10: Revd Kajsa
Sunday 26 October	10am	Parish Communion <i>Readings: Jeremiah 14.7-10, 19-end; 2 Timothy 4.6-8, 16-18; Luke 18.9-14</i> Children's Church
	6.30pm	Evening Worship <i>Readings: Ecclesiastes 11, 12; Matthew 22.34-end</i>
Monday 27 October	9am	Church open
Tuesday 28 October	9am	Church open

	11am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 29 October	9am	Church open
Thursday 30 October	8am	Men's breakfast (see below)



Art Exhibition - final week! Our Creation-themed art exhibition runs until Saturday 4 October. Church will be open to view the exhibition every day from 9am-12.30pm, except 10-11am on Wednesday 1 October, and all day on 2 October.

5 October, 10am: Harvest Service.

If you are able, please bring non-perishable food items or toiletries (or a cash donation) to support the Woodley Food Bank.



5 October, 11.45am: Harvest Bring

and Share Lunch. All are welcome to join us in the church hall for our bring and share lunch. There will be tea/coffee after the service (which will not be a Bread & Wine service), before lunch is served.

You don't have to sign up in advance, but it is helpful if you can so that we know how many people to expect. Sign up

here: <https://earleystpeters.churchsuite.com/events/ahybwrxr>

There is a separate sign-up sheet at the back of church for people who are willing to bring food.

If you have old clothes in adult sizes that could work for a scarecrow activity at the Harvest lunch, please would you lend/give them to us? If we get too much, they'll go to a charity shop, or can be given back to you. Please leave in the office, or place in bags outside the office with Kajsa's

name on them. There will also be craft activities available for adults and children. Please note, all these additional activities are optional!

Harvest Gratitude Wall: The Harvest Gratitude Wall is also returning and all proceeds will go to the Woodley Food Bank. This is where people have an opportunity to buy a thank you card, write their message of gratitude and pin it to the wall. This will be in church for the whole of October and November.

11 October, 3pm: Dementia

Friend training. We are planning to open Sunshine Social, a dementia café that is a place where people living with dementia and their carers can meet and



socialise with others over cake and crafts. Sunshine Social will run on the first Monday of each month at 2-3:30 pm starting 3 November at the Church Hall – and we need volunteers to help us run it!

If you would like to be part of this project, by making coffees, teas, cakes, crafting, and/or socialising, you need to attend both Dementia Friend training, and Foundation safeguarding training (unless you have already done so). More information will be sent out about the safeguarding training, but in the meantime, Revd Kajsa is running a training session on Saturday 11 October at 3 pm in church. If you know of anybody who does not attend Earley St Peter's but who would like to volunteer, they would also be warmly welcome.

Please note that volunteers need to attend a Dementia Friend session and do the safeguarding training before 31 October, in order to volunteer at Sunshine Social on 3 November.

You don't have to sign up to attend a training session, but it would be helpful if you could do so. To sign up to the session on 11 October, [click here](#). You can also sign up by contacting the parish office.

You can also support Sunshine Social with donations. As we aim to make Sunshine Social a cheerful and social space, and run activities, it would be great if anyone have unwanted items to donate (before Kajsa hits the charity shops), including: puzzles suitable for dementia (not

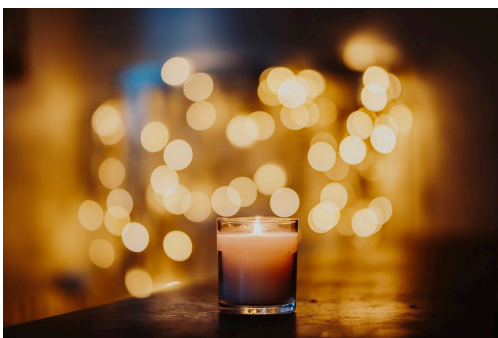
childish ones please), narrow vases for a few flowers to go on tables, magazines (old and new), a game of skittles, and adult colouring books. Please leave in the office, or placed in bags outside the office with Kajsa's name on them.

30 October, 8am, Men's Breakfast: Our speaker will be Jim Nelson on 'Return to Dunkirk'. Please sign up on the sheet at the back of church.

Welcome Madhuri! We recently welcomed Madhuri Kulkarni and her family to Earley St Peter's. Madhuri is an ordinand (trainee vicar) and was on placement with Revd Kate for a couple of months last year. We are delighted that she has now officially joined us as her 'home church' for the duration of her final year of training, meaning Madhuri and her family will be with us regularly until her ordination in July 2026.

Donation Envelopes: Envelopes for the next year will be out at the back of church in the next week or two. Please do not use the new ones until 2 November, or the current ones after 26 October. Numbers of people using the envelope scheme have dropped to a level that is unsustainable, due to rising costs, and it has been decided that we will not be continuing the scheme from November 2027. Please consider other ways that you can make your donations to the church. *Ann Munday*

Buddy system for lifts to church: To help some of our parishioners get to church on Sundays, we are operating a 'buddy system' to pair up volunteer drivers with those needing a lift. If you are able to offer someone a lift regularly or occasionally, please would you contact Keith Jordan, who is coordinating the buddy system, on jordankeith@hotmail.co.uk. A big thank you to all who currently drive others to church, it is so helpful, appreciated and important.



2 November, 3pm: All Souls' service. We invite you to a service of music, reflection and silence to remember our loved ones. During the service, we will read aloud the names of our loved ones. The names of those who have died in

the last two years will be added automatically to this list. If there is anyone else you would like to be remembered, please [fill in this form](#) or email admin@earleystpeters.org.uk by **23 October**.



Threads Through the Cross:
Guildford Cathedral 25 September

– 3 November 2025: I felt very privileged to see a stunning exhibition of huge tapestry panels, entitled *Threads Through the Bible*, at Ely Cathedral in June. They are the work of textile artist Jacqui Parkinson. The whole exhibition consists of 3 sequences: "Threads Through Creation", "Threads Through the Cross" and "Threads Through Revelation". Across a series of huge panels, each 2 – 3m high, the Bible stories are brought to life using fabric, colour and stitches in

a fascinating, creative and thought-provoking way.

Threads through the Bible | Jacqui Parkinson Textile Artist

Judith Bowler

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)

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.



'Introduction to Matthew's Gospel'

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

Saturday 22 November 2-4pm

Dates for your diary

3 November, 2pm: Sunshine Social.

9 November, 10am: Remembrance Service.

15 November, 2-5pm: 'Be A Chorister' Day. We invite anyone in school years 4-7 to discover what it's like to be part of our Song School. You'll spend an afternoon of singing and vocal training with professional musicians, followed by a short performance. Free of charge! To sign up, [click here](#). The deadline for applying is 7 November.

15 November, 7pm: Quiz Night in the church hall in aid of Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service and Earley St Peter's church. Tickets £10. Come as a team of eight people, a smaller group or join a team on the night. Please bring your own drinks and nibbles. To reserve a place, email Julia Eversham on davidweversham@talktalk.net or speak to Helen Price or Mary Brooke.

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