


across **ROYSTON**

April 2025

EASTER BRINGS
H O P E

A crown of thorns is placed over the letter 'O' in the word 'HOPE'. The crown of thorns is made of dark, sharp, and tangled branches, forming a circular shape. The background is a light, textured, parchment-like surface.

YOUNG VOICES JOIN THE CHURCH CHOIR



On Sunday 23rd March, we welcomed four children into the church choir. This marks the start of a new era of Choristerships at Royston Parish Church, where children will sing for all Sunday morning services during term time.

For their debut service, the four junior Choristers (called Probationers) sang *Lead Me, Lord* by S. S. Wesley, as well as the hymns and mass setting with the adult choir and congregation. The service began with a special ceremony where the Probationers were given their new robes by the adult members of the choir. The Probationers sang again on Sunday 30th March for the Mothering Sunday service, this time performing *Ave Maria* by Simon Lindley.

The Probationers will sing with us on Easter Sunday, and then on all Sundays in term-time thereafter. They rehearse with the grown-ups before every service, and on their own after school on Wednesdays. When the Probationers have completed their training, they will be formally inducted into Choristership and will receive their white surplices to wear over their red cassocks.

In a few years time, we aim to have about 20 Choristers, by recruiting 4-5 new Probationers every year, starting age 8 or 9.

If you know a child in school year 3, 4 or 5 who loves to sing, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please email Minister of Music Alex Trigg at music@roystonparishchurch.org.uk for more information, or to arrange a voice trial.

Contact Information

CLERGY

Vicar:

The Revd. Dr. Steven Sivyer 01763 243145
vicar@roystonparishchurch.org.uk
(off duty on Monday)*

Assistant Clergy:

The Revd. John Fidler 01763 241886
(off duty on Saturday)*

The Revd. Jim Dalglish 01763 257499
james.dalglish.t21@btinternet.com

LICENSED READERS

Emma Sivyer 07851 688610
emma@sivyer.org.uk

Canon Reg Bailey 250637
regbailey@aol.com

*** Please avoid contacting the staff on their off duty days**

LAY LEADERS OF WORSHIP

Rob Fox robert.fox@virgin.net

Andy Moorley andy@roystonparishchurch.onmicrosoft.com

CHURCH WARDENS

Vaughan West
Judy Rodgers

CHURCH OFFICE

Joanne Wallis 07935 774633
admin@roystonparishchurch.org.uk

Richard Marais (Churchwarden designate)
churchwardens@roystonparishchurch.org.uk

MINISTER OF MUSIC

Alex Trigg
music@roystonparishchurch.org.uk

PCC SECRETARY

Phil Perry 01763 662102

PCC TREASURERS

Jonathan & Charlotte Wicks
treasurer@roystonparishchurch.org.uk



Easter Services at Royston Parish Church



Palm Sunday 13th April

9.00-9.45: A quiet, reflective communion service.

10.30-12.00: A celebratory communion service, beginning at Fish Hill, where we will then process to the church.*

Monday 14th, Tuesday 15th & Wednesday 16th April

Every evening from 20.00-20.20

Night Prayer - A quiet, reflective sung service of prayer.

Maundy Thursday 17th April

20.00: A sung communion service with incense, followed by the Vigil accompanied by music from Taizé.

Good Friday 18th April

10.00-10.30: Hot Cross Bun Praise – Just like our well-known Tea Time Praise and Crib services, this is a lively and informal service for families, followed by Hot Cross Buns and other refreshments.

12.00-15.00: Meditation on the Cross – Marking the three hours that Jesus was on the cross, this is a time of quiet meditation, including a reflective service at 2 pm.

19.00-20.15 Come & Sing Stainer's Crucifixion – A chance to hear or even to join in with singing Stainer's well-known masterpiece.

Choir rehearsal details and sign up here: <https://bit.ly/SingStainer>

Holy Saturday 19th April

20.00-21.00 Tenebrae – A service of hymns, readings and fading light.

Easter Day 20th April

6.30-7.20: Sunrise Service – A service that begins outside the church in the dark around a fire, where the Easter Candle is lit and processed into the church with singing. The service is followed by refreshments including Bacon Butties.

9.00-9.45 BCP Communion Service – A quiet, reflective communion service, using traditional language.

10.30-11.40 Family Communion – A lively and celebratory service that is followed by an Easter Egg hunt.*

Further details at www.roystonparishchurch.org.uk

*Children's area with toys will be open for the services marked with an asterisk

CHURCH NEWS

It is with extreme sadness that Alex Trigg is having to tender his resignation as our Minister of Music and Director of Music Outreach for personal reasons. Alex has made a wonderful start to his time with us and his resignation came just at the time when children have begun becoming members of the choir. Alex's last Sunday with us will be on Easter Day. Please hold Alex in your prayers.

Congratulations to Vaughan West and Richard Marais who were elected as Churchwardens at our annual meetings last weekend. They now have a dedicated email address which goes directly to both of their inboxes

churchwardens@roystonparishchurch.org.uk

Judy Rodgers remains as a churchwarden until the end of June, when we will more formally give thanks for all that she has done.

Minister's Musings

Dear Friends

Growing up I always had a love of words, so did my dad. He would tell us of how, when he was at school, the teacher asked them to make up a sentence with the word “fascinate” in it. And with great glee, he would say, “I put my hand up and said, “My grandad has a waistcoat with nine buttons on it, but he is so fat, he can only “fasten eight”. Now if he told that story once, he told it a hundred times, and do you know, although we groaned at it, we still smiled and laughed just as he laughed at it, over and over again. Growing up, my favourite film was “The Magnificent Seven”. It was on television a lot especially at bank holidays or Christmas. And whenever it was over my dad would turn up at the doorway and say, “Did the goodies win this time?” and then fall about laughing.

And I have to say when it comes to the sense of humour, mine is a chip off the old block. And so, when my grandchildren were watching the same film over and over again, I could not resist the urge to ask: “Oh no, does the Titanic sink again?”

I write this because, believe it or not, it impacts the way I interpret scripture. So, for example, Luke narrates Jesus telling this parable: *“A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So, he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ The gardener replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”*

Do you get the joke yet? The joke is this: that fig tree is never getting cut down. Luke preserved it in his Gospel. Luke knew this great story he was writing would be shared and he hoped it would be shared until the end of time.

Every time someone read this parable, the fig tree got another chance. Luke wrote these words down around one thousand nine hundred and twenty years ago, which is one thousand nine hundred and nineteen more years than that fig tree had to produce. And the fig tree is still standing. Every time we read it, there is the tree still standing. Yes, the good guys win at the end of the Magnificent Seven – every time – because that’s how movies work. And yes, the fig tree is still standing because that gardener is taking care of it and always will.

The key words here are “another chance.” That’s grace. *“If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.”* Next year. Another chance. We read the parable again. Next year. Another chance. That’s grace.

Over the years I have heard people define the concept of grace together with the concepts of justice and mercy, as a way to distinguish between them. I have, myself preached on this: *“Justice is getting what you deserve. Mercy is not getting what you deserve. Grace is getting what you don’t deserve.”* I’ve always loved that, and these definitions have guided me my whole life. But recently, I’ve added this: *“Justice is having a chance. Mercy is having a second chance, or a third, or a fourth. Grace is not having your chances numbered.”*

Grace is being the fig tree that will always have the gardener tending to it, no matter how long it takes to bear fruit. Grace keeps us moving ever on,

especially when we are stuck in the in-between time, the time of potential but no results. Grace gives us another breath when grief has knocked the wind from us. Grace gives us another chance when disillusionment or apathy sap our will to seek for justice and peace. Grace gives us another bit of rope when we think we've come to the end of ours.

Grace is the sublime consequence of a God who will never give up on us. That's pretty good news, right? And yet, while God will never give up on us, we still have every opportunity to give up on God. Our chances are not numbered except by how many we are willing to take, by how often we are willing to trust God to be with us, come what may. I will be with you, says God. No matter how often you fail, no matter how many chances you need, I will be with you. That's grace.

It really is true that our chances are only numbered by how many chances we are willing to take. And grace beckons us to take more chances, to lead more expansive lives, to trust more deeply in the God who will never give up on us. And to bring that God to people who have never even been given one chance, who have never experienced the blessing of justice, let alone mercy or grace.

Yes, the good guys win at the end of The Magnificent Seven. Every time. Yes, the Titanic sinks. Yes, they find Nemo. Yes, the fig tree still stands. And yes, grace abounds in limitless chances to trust in a God who never, ever gives up.

Every blessing to you.

Reg



Mission of the Month: Global Care

Global Care is a Christian charity whose projects support children living in extreme poverty, the poorest of the poor.



For example, children with disabilities in places such as Uganda, rejected by society and neglected by their families. Dalit children in India who experience ethnic discrimination excluding them from school. Girls in countries like Sri Lanka, undervalued by families because of their gender and vulnerable to child marriage. Street children in Guatemala, extremely vulnerable to sexual exploitation, abuse and crime.

This focus on the most vulnerable children takes Global Care to the 'dark villages' of Zambia, overlooked by local government and cut off from resources.... to very recent war zones, such as South Sudan and Syria.... and to the children no one notices, the communities no one wants to know, the people with no hope and no future.

Children living in extreme poverty have many needs – food, shelter, medicine. They often also face further barriers stopping them from getting help – ethnic discrimination, disability, even their gender. Global Care works to support.

Global Care's projects work alongside local communities, who know where the greatest need lies. Their Sponsors and Change-Makers not only provide the food, shelter, clothing and medicine. But they provide it to help children reach the end goal: *education*. It is clear from the evidence that education is the best way to break the poverty cycle. Education opens up opportunities for children to become self-sufficient adults, providing for themselves and their families. Education produces a generation of children who are able to transform the future of their nation: to become its future leaders, business owners and entrepreneurs.

One of the ways in which Global Care works is to encourage supporters to sponsor a child or young person. **We at St. John the Baptist sponsor a student in Sri Lanka, whose educational progress we follow. This is part of our resolution to give 10% of our committed income to missions and charities.**

CHRISTIAN OF THE MONTH: APRIL 2025 GEORGE SELWYN

Commemorated by the Church of England on April 11th.

You are probably familiar with Selwyn College Cambridge, in Grange Road, founded in 1882. It was named in honour of one of the great figures of Victorian England, George Augustus Selwyn.

George was born in Hampstead in 1809 and educated at Eton and St. John's College Cambridge. After graduation he worked as an assistant master at Eton, was ordained a priest in 1834, and served as curate to the vicar of St. John's Windsor. His strong personality and his administrative skills were noted by the church authorities, and in 1841 he was consecrated a Bishop, with the intention of sending him as a missionary bishop to establish the episcopate in New Zealand.



On the long voyage to New Zealand in 1841 he wisely learned the Maori language, in which he was able to preach as soon as he arrived. He first established his base at a settlement founded by the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) a few years earlier. Over the subsequent years there were sometimes uneasy relations between Selwyn (high church) and the C.M.S. missionaries (low church).

During the next 28 years George organised the church in New Zealand, developing a scheme to subdivide his diocese, ordaining other bishops and gaining permission for the New Zealand church to manage its own affairs through a general synod. His diocese included Melanesia, and he learned to sail, visiting many Pacific islands.

He was always a champion of the rights of the indigenous people, especially opposing the rapacious seizure of land by colonists. This sometimes brought him into conflict with the colonial authorities. Unfortunately he lost the confidence of the Maoris by serving as chaplain to the British forces during the invasion of Waikato, one of the biggest military actions of the “New Zealand Wars”.

In 1867 he was in London at the first international Lambeth Conference, which he had done much to initiate. Whilst there he was persuaded to forsake New Zealand, to serve as the Bishop of Lichfield, a post which he held for 11 years until his death aged 69 on April 11th. 1878.

In 1839 George had married Sarah Richardson, with whom he had two sons, William and John, who later was to be the second master of Selwyn College.

The website of the College describes him thus :

“a big, powerful, controversial, fearless man. His work in New Zealand and his personality created an extraordinary impression among the Victorians. He was one of the great men of his generation.”

Upcoming Events

There are a number of events coming up over the next few months to look forward to.

- 27th April, 3:30pm - Scones of Praise
- 3rd and 5th May - Book Fayre
- 20th June - Hymns & Pimm's
- 21st June - Saxophone Quartet (more details to follow)
- 22nd June - Come and Sing choral evensong

The Events Committee would appreciate your support, as we'll need donations of scones, cakes, books, as well as your time to sort books and man stalls. There will be a sign-up sheet at the back of church to register help for the book fayre. Thanks in advance.

Ruth Savage

Pasque Flowers

The Pasque flower is a rare plant that grows on chalk and limestone grasslands. It's found on only a handful of nature reserves, and we're lucky that it grows on one of the south-facing hills next to the golf course on Therfield Heath.

It blooms in April around Easter time, which is where it derives its name. It's a small plant, with beautiful purple flowers and yellow centres.



If you've never seen them, I would encourage you to go for a walk on a sunny April day either by yourself, or with your family, friends, or dogs, to see this rare flower.

Hot Cross Buns



and Praise

**Friday 18th April
10am**

Royston Parish Church

**An interactive service for children
and their families with the
Teatime Praise team**



Heath Watch with Holly (the little dog)

Welcome to the Thirty-Eighth in a series of dog walking diaries, documenting the flora and fauna on the beautiful heath as the seasons change.



January and February 2025

January started with rain and wind and on the second of the month the grass was frozen and many seagulls were on the heath, the following day was even colder, a cold spell had begun, one day there was so much frost



it looked like snowfall. Wood pigeons waddled about looking rather sad but otherwise the heath's birdlife was less visible than usual. One day about this time I watched a robin, sometimes we stop noticing common birds and forget how beautiful they are. The robin not only has a beautiful colouring but and beautiful nature too, they are generally so tame and interact with humanity in the most charming manner, it must be our most social bird.

Although it was too cloudy to appreciate the full moon it was on 13th. January's full moon is called the wolf moon as it is said to be accompanied by the howling of wolves.

Once the rain passed and the weather was drier the birds of prey took to the air again, they can't fly in wet weather. There are four birds of prey that can frequently be seen on the heath, red kites, buzzards, kestrels and sparrow hawks.



Towards the end of the month bulbs started to shoot, crocus, snowdrops and aconites, I believe that these must be self set from nearby gardens and grown from seeds rather than bulbs. Towards the end of January we had Storm Éowyn, January ended as it began with bad weather.

February was rather muddy to start with and Holly needed rubbing down when we got home, I noticed a good number of spiders at the beginning of the month although I don't know why they should be more visible, for the first time I started to notice just how much they varied. The UK has 650 different species of spider, I'm going to try to learn to identify at least the most common ones.



Following the damp there was a lot of fungi to be seen, a strange but rather beautiful part of the heath's ecology. Tree bark is another aspect of beauty which is easily overlooked, some of the patterns are quite remarkable, especially on the older trees. I'm pleased to say that I saw and heard a good number of greenfinch recently, last year they were hard to find. The full moon was in the middle of the month and is known as the snow moon, but no snow this year.

Towards the end of February there were a lot of catkins, these are types of flowers that appear in the winter month and hang like lambs tails on bare branches and form part of an English winter. One wet day the heath paths were covered with worms, it was like a horror film, it was impossible not to walk on them so I walked on the grass instead. Finally the month ended with bright blue skies, sharp frosts and bright sunny days, spring was on its way.

More next time.....

Sunday Services for April 2025

Services to be held in Royston Parish Church

6th April	9 am	Said Communion Service
	10.30 am	Sung Communion Service with Choir, Children's Church followed by Treble Makers and refreshments
13th PALM SUNDAY	9 am	Said Communion Service
	10.30 am	Palm Sunday Procession from the top of the High Street to Church
	10.30 am	In Church—Sung Communion Service with Choir, Children's Church followed by Treble Makers and refreshments
20th EASTER DAY	9 am	Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion Service
	10.30 am	Family Communion Service with Choir, Easter Egg Hunt followed by refreshments
27th	9 am	Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion Service
	10.30 am	Sung Communion Service with Choir, Children's Church followed by refreshments
	1 pm	Service for Uniformed Groups
	3.30 pm	Scones of Praise