

# across ROYSTON

June 2025



THE PRIORY AND PARISH CHURCH OF  
ST JOHN THE BAPTIST ROYSTON

## PATRONAL FESTIVAL

—  
20th-22nd June

MELBOURN STREET  
ROYSTON  
SG8 7BP

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## **Royston Wellbeing Hub**

**Every Tuesday 10.30am – 12.30pm**

**Coombes Community Centre, Burns Road, Royston, SG8 5PT**

The Garden House Hospice, under their Compassionate Neighbours scheme, have so far rolled out 15 Wellbeing Hubs across Stevenage and North Herts. Although organised by the Hospice, the Wellbeing Hubs are for anyone who might benefit from them, not just for those with terminal illness.

What can I expect from a Wellbeing Hub?

- ◆ Join us for a cup of tea and a chat.
- ◆ Talk and be listened to by one of our team members.
- ◆ Gain information about our therapies and support services.
- ◆ Join us in a seated exercise group.
- ◆ Take part in creative and fun activities that promote health and wellbeing.
- ◆ Feel more in control and live life to its greatest potential.

For more information contact the Wellbeing Hub Coordinator:

Mobile: 07506 992757

Email: [cn@ghhospicecare.org.uk](mailto:cn@ghhospicecare.org.uk)

Or Jim Dagleish:

Mobile: 07972 617622

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## Contact Information

### CLERGY

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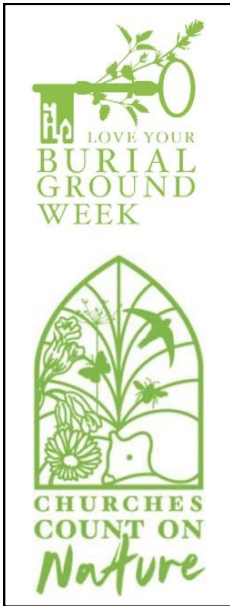
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## Great Big Green Week



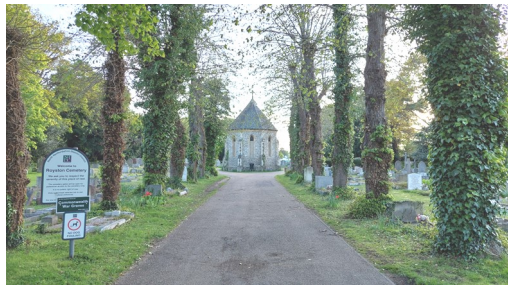
The Great Big Green Week 2025 is taking place from 7th to 15th June.

"What is it?" I hear you ask. Well, it's the UK's biggest celebration of community action to tackle climate change and protect nature. The first Great Big Green Week took place in September 2021, and was the largest event for climate and nature, with over 5,000 events taking place across the country. Communities, schools, businesses, churches and more join together in a wave of support for action to protect the planet.

It's an opportunity to swap ideas with likeminded people on how to protect our planet, and make small changes which across the country make a large difference.

What's happening in our area? Royston Museum is teaming up with Royston Environmental group on Saturday 14th June, 10am - 4pm, and hosting a Green

Festival. There will be a range of stalls and activities, from hands-on maintenance and repair advice to seed/plant swaps, and crafts to take home with you. There will also be two showings of ReAction Collective's film about a young person's transformation from climate anxiety to action. These will be at 10:30am and 2pm.



Our church is encouraging people to participate in the Churches in Nature Scheme by measuring the plant and animal species in our church yard and the additional burial ground during the week. If you are interested in participating, you can find out more information at this website <https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/churches-count-on-nature-faqs/>

If you have a Smartphone, you can download an app called "iNaturalist", which will help you identify the species found, log where you've seen them,

and how many. Once in the app, join the Beautiful Burial Grounds Project, and start submitting your records.

The traditional pen and paper method of data collection is also possible, you can then upload your records to the website afterwards.

This is a great activity to involve children in, while spending time outdoors. It will be interesting to find out the diversity of species that we have in the grounds owned by our church, and monitor year on year to see any change.

**Safety Notes:**

Where possible, stick to the paths.

Wear suitable shoes for walking on any uneven ground, especially if it is wet.

Wear long trousers to protect against insects or stinging nettles and thorny plants.

Respect the gravestones and monuments: do not walk or climb on the monuments or disturb them in any way.

Avoid touching or eating any of the plants.

# Minister's Musings



## Let us build a house where love can dwell

is the first line of a hymn that has been sung a few times recently. The refrain concludes

### **All are welcome in this place.**

We are blessed to regularly see new faces among our worshipping congregation and of course they are all welcome in this place. But how do we ensure not only that they are welcome, but that they feel welcome? We are **All Welcomers!** Each of us is called to ensure that anyone new to our church is made to feel welcome.

I appreciate that Sunday mornings can be very busy, both before and after worship – there are activities to plan and people to see. These things are important. But, if you see someone unfamiliar and on their own, then perhaps it should be your priority to make them feel welcome.

You do not need to be a great conversationalist to do this. You just need to be a good listener with a heart for the stranger. Jesus said, 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me.' (Matt 25.35). Whenever you welcome a stranger you are welcoming Jesus.

So, find out who this stranger is. Listen and really want to get to know them. They are a child of God, who has turned up at St John's, and God has brought them face to face with you. Listen to their story; encourage them to tell it; learn about them. When you know them a little better, you may be able to introduce them to someone with a similar story – outlook, interests, job, location, children etc. The more contacts a person has, the more likely they are to return, being slowly built into the church family.

At the very least, ensure that they have information about our church life – monthly magazine, weekly notice sheet, flyers about events etc.

It sounds simple, and it is, but that doesn't mean it is easy. This month we celebrate Pentecost and the gift of the Holy Spirit and are reminded that these meetings, between welcomer and stranger, are not simply meetings between two people. The Holy Spirit has led this person to St John's and has led you to see them and greet them.

We can trust the Holy Spirit to lead us in the conversation, to give us the right questions to ask and provide the discernment to hear what the person is saying. We can rely on the Holy Spirit for wisdom for us to make the right Introductions and otherwise help the person to feel welcomed.

As the visitor slowly becomes a part of the church family, they can be connected with small groups that interest them – Choir, Men's/Ladies' Group, Saturday Coffee, Knit & Natter, Home Groups etc.

When we have organised Neighbourhoods (groups of people belonging to St John's living in particular neighbourhoods) they can be linked into their Neighbourhood.

The refrain of another hymn says:

**Thank you, O my Father, for giving us your Son,  
And leaving us your Spirit 'till your work on earth is done.**

It is the indwelling Holy Spirit who makes us church family. It is only by the power of the Holy Spirit that we will truly welcome the stranger into the family.

Blessings,

**Jim.**

Friday 20th June 7.30 PM

## Hymns & Pimm's

No need to book, simply turn up to this informal fun event where you can request for us all to sing your favourite hymns. There will be free refreshments and glasses of Pimm's available for a small charge.

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Saturday 21st June 7.30pm  
(doors open at 7pm)

## Music for a Midsummer Evening Lucerna Saxophone Quartet

Meg Glover - Soprano Saxophone  
Maya Mitra - Alto Saxophone  
Rosemary Ball - Tenor Saxophone  
Paynor Tsate - Baritone Saxophone

The Lucerna Quartet is made up of four highly accomplished saxophonists, all scholars or award-winners at the Royal College of Music. Between them, they have performed at famous venues in London, across the country and the world, with famous ensembles, performers and conductors, across various musical genres including classical and jazz.

One of the performers, Rosemary Ball, is well known locally as she has lived in Royston all of her life and grew up playing in local ensembles such as Royston Town Band.

The Lucerna Quartet will present a wonderful evening of music to help celebrate midsummer evening.

Tickets are £12 adults; £5 under 18s.

To book tickets: follow this link: [www.bit.ly/SaxTickets](http://www.bit.ly/SaxTickets)  
scan the code, or contact the church office



**Sunday 22nd June 9am**

A traditional Communion Service from the Book of Common Prayer  
which is quiet and reflective. Free.

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**Sunday 22nd June 10.30 am**

## **Festival Service**

A celebratory service led by Bishop Rob Wickham. Free

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**Sunday 22nd June 2 pm**

## **Come and Sing Festival Evensong Rehearsal**

Calling all singers!

Come and join us for singing the service of Evensong

2pm Arrive

2.15pm Rehearsal

4.15pm Cream Tea

5pm Evensong

**£10 to cover music and refreshments**

To sign up to sing: follow this link  
[www.bit.ly/4jNE73S](http://www.bit.ly/4jNE73S), scan the code,  
or contact the church office.



Sunday 22nd June 4.15 pm

## Sunday Cream Tea

Enjoy a tasty scone with jam and cream served with a cup of tea or coffee before Choral Evensong

£7 per person

Please pre-book your cream tea by either following this link [www.bit.ly/4jNE73S](http://www.bit.ly/4jNE73S), scan the code or contact the Church Office



Sunday 22nd June 5 pm

## Festival Evensong

Our Come and Sing Choir will lead a traditional service of Choral Evensong. Free



**Jesus' Day Off -  
the feeding of the five thousand**

**TEA TIME PRAISE!**

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July 3.30 pm**

**ALL WELCOME!**

## MISSION OF THE MONTH: MERCY SHIPS



Mercy Ships is a faith-based international development organisation that deploys hospital ships to some of the poorest countries in the world, delivering vital, free healthcare to people in desperate need.

As well as completing thousands of urgent operations onboard its floating hospitals, the **Africa Mercy** and the **Global Mercy**, Mercy Ships volunteers also work closely with host nations to improve the way healthcare is delivered *across the country*, by training and mentoring local medical staff, and renovating hospitals and clinics.

Conditions requiring surgical treatment kill more people in low-income countries than HIV/Aids, TB and malaria combined. Globally, five billion people have no access to safe, affordable surgery when they need it. In sub-Saharan Africa, up to 69% of people live on less than £2 a day. Healthcare in these countries either doesn't exist or is unaffordable to the vast majority of the population.

Among the countries Mercy Ships serves, which lie on the lower third of the World Health Organisation's Human Development Index, access to safe, affordable and timely surgery is extremely limited. As a result, countless people suffer and die from "diseases of poverty" that can easily be cured.

Founded in 1978 by Don and Deyon Stephens, Mercy Ships has worked in more than 55 countries, providing services valued at more than £1.3 billion.

Mercy Ships follows the model of Jesus by "**bringing hope and healing to the forgotten poor**", helping people of all faiths and none.

**As a church, St. John the Baptist is committed to giving 10% of our regular income to charities and missions. Mercy Ships is one of those we regularly support.**

## CHRISTIAN OF THE MONTH: ST. ETHELDREDA

*Commemorated by the Church of England on June 23rd.*

Etheldreda, also known as Audrey, was a 7th. Century princess of the East Angles, who as an abbess founded the monastery where Ely Cathedral now stands.



She was the daughter of King Anna of the East Angles, and was born at Exning in Suffolk around the year 630. As a young girl she was married to a nobleman named Tonbert, but remained a virgin. After Tonbert's death she remarried, for political reasons, teenage Prince Egfrith of Northumberland. At first Egfrith agreed that she could remain a virgin, but after 12 years had passed he wished to consummate the marriage. Instead of allowing this, Etheldreda, following the advice of St. Wilfrid of Northumbria, left him and entered a convent at Coldingham. With the reluctant agreement of Egfrith, the marriage was dissolved in 672.

The following year Etheldreda restored the church at Ely which had been destroyed by Penda, the pagan king of Mercia, and founded a double monastery (men and women) on the site. For the next seven years until her death she lived an austere life of penance and prayer, eating only one meal a day, and wearing woollen clothing instead of linen.

Along with several other nuns of her community, she died of plague. However she also had a tumour on her neck, which was interpreted as divine punishment for her vanity in wearing necklaces in her younger days.

Seventeen years after her death her body was found to be incorrupt (not decomposing), even its wrappings as fresh as the day she was buried - although her tumour had been healed. Moved to a new sarcophagus, this became a much revered shrine, the focus of pilgrimage at Ely for centuries. The shrine was destroyed during the Reformation in 1541, but some relics are claimed by St. Etheldreda's church in London.

The Venerable Bede wrote a long hymn in praise of Etheldreda and many churches were dedicated to her. She was undoubtedly one of the most popular of the Anglo-Saxon women saints. In art she is shown crowned, usually as an abbess, sometimes with 2 does, which were said to have supplied Ely with milk during a famine.

*Footnote.* St. Audrey's fair was held at Ely, and the word "tawdry" (a corruption of "St. Audrey") possibly refers to the poor quality of goods sold there.

## Heath Watch with Holly (the little dog)

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



### MAY 2025

It was warm at the start of May, in fact, sometimes I would have said that it was hot, such as when I stood still while Holly got her breath back, watching a bee climb into a nettle flower it felt like summer had come, but true to our English weather it soon became cold again and then gradually warmed up through the month. There was a lot of cow parsley on the heath at that time and it gave off a light scent, not sweet like roses but a herb-like scent, rather like dill. I watched a song thrush for some time, this beautifully marked bird used to be so common around Royston but I don't often see them now. The song thrush is one of the relatively small number of birds that use a tool, it hammers snails onto stones to get at the edible parts and I remember watching this as a child when I first became interested in the local wild birds. I saw a Buzzard attacking a Red Kite and I watched it for some time and



coinciding with the VE celebrations it reminded me of the Battle of Britain pilots as it flew above the kite and then dived onto it aggressively. Eventually the red kite had enough and flew off apparently unharmed.

The full moon this month was on the 12th and is called The Flower Moon, which was quite appropriate. Wild flowers were plentiful, stinging nettles blew gently in the breeze, their white flowers standing out against the dark green leaves. I recalled nettles being eaten and considered highly nutritious and medicinal but there was no fun gathering

them. When we were stung as children we were taught to rub a dock leaf on the sting and it stopped the pain straight away.

Another plentiful wild plant on the heath is sticky weed, sometimes called cleavers or goose grass, it lives up to its name and attaches itself to anything that rubs against it (especially dogs!). It is a favourite food of certain caterpillars and is said to have medicinal properties.

Moving on a week or two there was a lot of Campion and this year far more pink than usual and buttercups which give a yellow sheen to the whole area where they grow, but the mower cut them just before the bank holiday. Wild roses grew in the hedgerows, these single flowers are every bit as beautiful as their highly cultivated cousins which stand so proudly in our gardens and they are much better for the bees.

Towards the end of the month the grass was tall and blew in the wind looking like the sea, I saw wagtails on the golf greens, with their funny walk a charm of Goldfinch and heard the first sounds of the larks and meadow pipits overhead. I conclude on a slightly chilly bank holiday Monday, Easter coming to an end and Ascension day fast approaching.



More next time.....

# Sunday Services for June 2025

## Services to be held in Royston Parish Church

1st June	9 am	Said Communion Service
	10.30 am	Sung Communion Service with Choir, Children's Church followed by refreshments
	5 pm	Evening Praise
8th Pentecost	9 am	Said Communion Service
	10.30 am	Sung Communion Service with Choir, Children's Church followed by refreshments
	3.30 pm	Tea Time Praise!
15th Trinity Sunday	9 am	Said Communion Service
	10.30 am	Sung Communion Service with Choir, Children's Church followed by refreshments
	12.30 pm	Baptism Service
22nd Patronal Festival	9 am	BCP Holy Communion Service
	10.30 am	Sung Communion Service with Bishop Rob Wickham, Choir, Children's Church followed by refreshments
	5 pm	Choral Evensong (see page 10)
29th	9 am	Said Communion Service
	10.30 am	Service of the Word
	2.30 pm	Ordination at St. Albans Cathedral