across ROYSTON

November 2026



Christmas Jumper Swap
during Tree Lighting-up weekend

Friday 27th November 6:30-8:30pm

Saturday 28th November 10:30-4:40pm

Would you like to refresh your Christmas wardrobe in a sustainable way? We are repeating last year's successful Christmas Jumper Swap, held in conjunction with Royston Environmental Group in church during the Christmas Tree Lighting celebrations.

All you need to do is bring along your old Christmas clothing items (clean), have a look at the items on the stall, and if you can find something that you would like, then simply swap it with your old jumper. No money changes hands, and no clothes go to landfill!



It's especially good if you have children who outgrow their Christmas jumpers each year. So have a look through your wardrobes now and see if there are any items you'd be prepared to swap and then come along either on the evening of Friday 27th November or during our Christmas Tree Lighting Up day of Saturday 28th November.

Contact Information

www.roystonparishchurch.org.uk **01763 243145**

CLERGY

Vicar:

The Revd. Dr. Steven Sivyer **01763 580242**
vicar@roystonparishchurch.org.uk
(off duty on Monday)*

Assistant Clergy:

The Revd. Jaime Roberts **01763 580241**
curate@roystonparishchurch.org.uk
(off duty on Friday) *

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

The Revd. Jim Dalgleish **07972 617622**
james.dalgleish.t21@btinternet.com

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

LICENSED READERS

Emma Sivyer **07851 688610**
emma@sivyer.org.uk

Canon Reg Bailey **01763 250637**
regbailey@aol.com

LAY LEADERS OF WORSHIP

Rob Fox **rjfox2480@gmail.com**

Andy Moorley **andy@roystonparishchurch.onmicrosoft.com**

MINISTER OF MUSIC

CHURCH WARDENS

Kay Makoweicki
Richard Marais
churchwardens@roystonparishchurch.org.uk

CHURCH OFFICE

Joanne Wallis **01763 580218**
admin@roystonparishchurch.org.uk

PCC SECRETARY

Phil Perry **01763 662102**

PCC TREASURERS

Jonathan & Charlotte Wicks
treasurer@roystonparishchurch.org.uk

WAITING FOR A KINGDOM OF HOPE



When we lived in West Kent, I used to take the train to work in Canterbury. As November arrived, I would leave home in the dark and watch the sun rise as I travelled east (see the picture of the view from the train, complete with reflections of the carriage lights!).

I also used to pray Morning Prayer on the train, and part of that service is the song of Zechariah, found in the first chapter of Luke's Gospel and known as the *Benedictus*. At this time of year, as I watched the sunrise, I was always particularly struck by these words:

By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. (Luke 1:78–79)

Something I always noticed, but never quite managed to capture in a photograph, was just how long the shadows were as the sun broke over the horizon. Even as the light began to spread across the countryside, large parts of the fields remained in shade, as the low angle of the rising sun cast enormous shadows from the trees across the landscape.

I often found myself thinking about how this is such a powerful picture of our world. There are so many people who still sit in darkness, even as the light begins to break over the horizon. We see it in the suffering caused by war and conflict, in injustice and poverty, in loneliness and grief, and in the lives of those who struggle to find hope.

At this point in the Church's year, we make space to remember. At All Saints and All Souls we remember those who have gone before us, and on Remembrance Sunday we recall those who have given their lives in war and conflict. We acknowledge both the darkness that has been and the darkness that continues to be part of our human experience.

Then, at the end of November, we celebrate Christ the King. We proclaim that Christ reigns over all creation, not as an earthly ruler who exercises power through force or fear, but as the King whose kingdom is founded on love, justice, mercy and peace.

Perhaps the long shadows of that November sunrise are a helpful reminder that the coming of the light does not mean that all darkness immediately disappears. The world is not yet as God longs for it to be. There is still much to grieve, much to challenge and much to change. But the light is breaking in, and we are called to live by its hope.

As we enter Advent, perhaps we might ask ourselves what it means to be people of this coming Kingdom. Where can we bring light into someone else's darkness? How can we work for peace, show mercy, stand alongside those who are suffering and offer hope where it seems to be in short supply?

We cannot make the sun rise any sooner, but we can choose to live in its light.

Emma Sivyer

CHRISTIAN OF THE MONTH – MARGERY KEMPE



Commemorated by the Church of England on November 9th.

Margery Kempe (c.1373 – c.1438) was an English Christian mystic and pilgrim whose remarkable life provides a rare insight into the religious beliefs, social expectations and everyday experiences of women in the late Middle Ages. She is best known for *The Book of Margery Kempe,* widely regarded as the earliest surviving autobiography in English.

She was born in King's Lynn, Norfolk, around 1373. Her father, John Brunham, was a prominent local merchant and civic official. She married John Kempe and had fourteen children, but her life took an unexpected turn following the birth of her first child. She experienced a severe mental and spiritual crisis, during which she described visions of Christ and other religious figures.
These experiences inspired her to pursue a more intensely religious life. Although she remained a wife and mother, Kempe sought to devote herself increasingly to prayer, contemplation and pilgrimage.

Margery became known for her intense expressions of religious emotion, particularly her loud crying and weeping during prayer and worship. She believed these reactions reflected her profound love for Christ and her participation in the suffering of the Crucifixion. However, her behaviour sometimes attracted hostility and suspicion, and she faced accusations of religious impropriety.

She undertook extensive pilgrimages, travelling to Jerusalem, Rome, Santiago de Compostela and other religious destinations. These journeys demonstrated her determination to pursue her spiritual calling beyond the confines of her home and local community. Her experiences also brought her into contact with different cultures, religious communities and social classes.

The Book of Margery Kempe recounts her spiritual visions, family life, pilgrimages and struggles to be accepted as a religious woman. As she could not write the work herself, she dictated her account to scribes during the 1430s. The book is particularly valuable because it combines religious reflection with vivid descriptions of ordinary medieval life. It explores the challenges faced by a woman who sought spiritual authority in a society in which religious institutions and public leadership were largely controlled by men. The work is unusual in its style: Kempe refers to herself in the third person, often as "this creature", rather than consistently using the first person. Her narrative nevertheless offers a deeply personal account of her beliefs, emotions and determination to follow what she understood as God's will.

The sole surviving manuscript, now held by the British Library, was rediscovered in 1934 after centuries of obscurity. Its survival has enabled modern readers and scholars to appreciate Kempe's contribution to medieval literature and religious history.

Margery Kempe remains an important figure in the history of English literature, women's writing and Christian mysticism. Her life challenges conventional assumptions about medieval women, showing how a married woman could seek religious independence, travel widely and claim spiritual authority outside a convent. Although her emotional displays and unconventional behaviour made her controversial in her own time, her writings have ensured that her experiences continue to be studied today.

MISSION OF THE MONTH

Mission Society (CMS) is a Christian mission organisation rooted in the Anglican Church, founded in 1799. Its main purpose is to share the good news of Jesus Christ through evangelism, discipleship, community development and practical service to people in need. Over the years, CMS has played an important role in spreading Christianity and supporting communities in different parts of the world.

The work of CMS focuses on helping people discover and live out their Christian faith. It supports missionaries, church leaders and local communities in responding to spiritual, social and economic challenges. Through partnerships with churches and other organisations, CMS encourages the growth of Christian communities and equips people to serve others in the name of Christ.

CMS also works among people who are marginalised, overlooked or facing difficult circumstances. Its activities include promoting peace in areas affected by conflict, supporting indigenous communities, and developing creative ways of sharing the Christian faith. It also trains Christians for pioneering mission and equips churches to engage more effectively with their local communities.

Here at St.John's we currently support C.M.S through our partnership with Eric and Sandra Read, who work in the Philippines. There they promote natural farming methods, in a country where there is an urgent need for farming to become more climate resilient and sustainable, and for people to embrace creation care. Eric, an agricultural engineer, and Sandra are working towards a more productive, nature-driven approach, known as syntropic farming, and encouraging others to do the same.

At the same time they are working to equip local churches in holistic mission for real community impact.



This year we hope to give £2,000 towards their work.

SUSTAINABLE LIVING

After a long summer and a fairly mild autumn, it can be tempting to think that winter is still a long way off. But as October draws to a close, the evenings are already noticeably shorter and chillier, and we may be finding ourselves reaching for the thermostat and an extra jumper. Now is a good time to think about how we can keep our homes warm while also caring for the world God has entrusted to us.

From an Eco Church perspective, sustainable living is not about being perfect or making life unnecessarily difficult. It is about the small, thoughtful choices we make every day, recognising that our homes, our energy use and our care for one another are all part of our Christian stewardship.

One of the simplest ways to reduce energy use is to keep the heat we already have. Draught-proofing around doors and windows, closing curtains as daylight fades, and fitting a draught excluder at the bottom of an outside door can make a noticeable difference. Thick curtains help keep rooms cosy, while rugs on bare floors can make them feel warmer underfoot.

If you have a hot-water tank, an insulating jacket can help retain heat. Loft insulation is another worthwhile investment, as a poorly insulated roof can allow a surprising amount of warmth to escape. Even small changes can help reduce energy bills as well as our carbon footprint.

It is also worth checking that radiators are not blocked by furniture or heavy curtains, so warmth can circulate freely. And before turning up the heating, why not try an extra layer, a warm drink or a cosy blanket? Simple changes like these may help us feel comfortable without using more energy than we need.

Of course, not everyone has the same choices. For some, keeping warm is a real financial worry, and reducing heating is not always a realistic or healthy option. Sustainable living must never become a competition to see who can manage with the least heat.

As a church community, we can help by looking out for older neighbours, those living alone and anyone struggling with rising energy costs. Sharing information about grants, local energy advice and community support can make a practical difference. A warm welcome at church, a friendly conversation or an invitation to a community gathering can also help someone feel less isolated during the colder months.

As Christians, we are called to love our neighbours and care for creation. This November, perhaps we can do both: make our homes a little more energy-efficient, waste a little less, and offer a little more warmth to those around us.

As the nights draw in and the colder weather approaches, may we remember that warmth is about more than heating. It is also kindness, generosity and community.

Jaime Roberts

Heath Watch with Holly (the little dog)



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

October 2026

The colours of Autumn must be among the most beautiful sights in nature, the fallen leaves range from green through to yellow red and brown, I recall happy memories of Holly in her younger years playing and scattering them in the wind. Now as she approaches her 18th birthday she has no energy to play and our walks are very short.



I saw the air ambulance land on the heath early in the month, we are so lucky to have this dedicated organisation when we need it.

Many mornings were rather cold and the dew was heavy on the grass, Holly needed drying even when we had only been in the garden, (she only has short legs!). The sun was low and very bright, glare from the morning sun has been quite a problem this year, it failed to warm the day. Local people used to announce autumn with the phrase "The power has gone out of the sun".

We don't go far on the heath now and most days don't even get there, but there is always plenty to see even in our gardens. There were are few days early in the month when I thought that nature was coming to me, first Holly found a frog and I caught them both looking at each other, I wonder what they were thinking, and the following few nights there was a bat flying in the garden, I love to see bats, they are like shadows, and sometimes you can hear their clicking sound. The UK is home to 18 species of bat, the one I saw was a common pipistrelle, I am reliably informed that they can eat up to 3000 insects every night. I love the german for bat "fledermaus" which is literally fluttering or flapping mouse, such a lovely description.

The hedge on the edge of the heath by the main road contains a lot of old man's beard, sometimes called traveller's joy which is a type of wild clematis and has most beautiful seed heads that do look like an unkempt beard, they are a favourite food source of goldfinches.



Towards the end of the month there were some misty mornings, just right for the time of year, reminding us of the opening line of John Keat's poem "To Autumn", "Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness", the mist settles on spiders' webs and I am always surprised to see how many spiders' webs there are, most of the time se don't know that they are there. Also around the end of the month we had storms Austen and Boelo, I love to hear the sound of the wind in the trees.



I noticed a lot of holly berries this year, it is always said that this indicates that a hard winter is on the way. Finally the full moon on 25th of the month fell on a lovely clear moonlit night, I felt sure that Holly was enjoying her last little walk of the day. The October moon is called the Hunters' moon because it was traditionally used by hunters to track prey later into the evening.

It is All Souls this Sunday, the summer is a fading memory and Christmas is on the distant horizon….

More next time……

Anthony Pigg

ADVENT CAROL SERVICE

29TH NOVEMBER 5PM

A CONTEMPLATIVE SERVICE ANTICIPATING THE COMING OF CHRIST WITH BIBLE READINGS, CHOIR ANTHEMS AND ADVENT CAROLS



Parish Church of
ST. JOHN
THE BAPTIST


TOWN CHRISTMAS LIGHT
SWITCH-ON
27TH NOVEMBER 6.30-8.30PM
COME INTO THE CHURCH TO
GET WARM, USE THE TOILETS,
GRAB SOME FREE SOUP, OR
BUY OTHER REFRESHMENTS
Parish Church of
ST. JOHN
THE BAPTIST

Parish Church of ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Christmas Services

29th November 5pm Advent Carol Service
A contemplative service anticipating the coming of Christ with bible readings, choir anthems and carols

6th December 3.30pm Christingle
Tea-Time Praise service for the family with Christingles

19th December 5pm Blue Christmas
A quiet and reflective service for those who find Christmas difficult for any reason

20th December 5pm Traditional Christmas Carol Service The annual carol service, with bible readings, choir anthems & carols

24th December 2.30pm & 4pm Crib Service
A service for all the family, held twice because of demand

24th December 11pm Midnight Mass
The traditional service of the first communion at Christmas

25th December 10am Family Communion Service
A family communion service with a chance for children to show & tell Christmas presents

Please note that the children's play area will be closed during these services with exception to the Family Communion Service.
In addition to these special services, we have the following services every Sunday morning:
9am A quiet, reflective service of Communion (in traditional language on the 4th Sunday of the month)
10.30am A service of communion with music and children's activities, followed by refreshments

Further details at www.roystonparishchurch.org.uk

Sunday Services for November 2026

Services to be held in Royston Parish Church

Sunday 8th November	
09:30 - 10:30	**Remembrance Sunday Communion Service with music/choir, children's groups/toy area**
10:45 - 11:30	**Remembrance Day Service at the War Memorial**
11:45 - 12:15	**Treble Makers**
15:30 - 17:00	**Tea Time Praise**
Sunday 15th November	
09:00 - 09:45	**Communion Service that is quiet and reflective**
10:30 - 11:40	**Communion Service with music/choir, children's groups/toy area, followed by refreshments**
11:45 - 12:15	**Treble Makers**
12:30 - 13:30	**Baptism service for Amelia Brebner**
17:00 - 18:00	**Taize Service of Meditation**
Sunday 22nd November	
09:00 - 09:45	**Communion Service in traditional language (BCP) that is quiet and reflective**
10:30 - 11:40	**Communion Service with music/choir, children's groups/toy area, followed by refreshments**
11:45 - 12:15	**Treble Makers**
Sunday 29th November	
09:00 - 09:45	**Communion Service that is quiet and reflective**
10:30 - 11:40	**Communion Service with music/choir, children's groups/toy area, followed by refreshments**
11:45 - 12:15	**Treble Makers**
15:00 - 17:00	**Choir rehearsal for Advent Carol Service**
15:00 - 16:30	**Advent Carol Service Choir Rehearsal**
17:00 - 18:00	**Advent Carol Service**

DID YOU KNOW?

You can access an on-line version of the Across Royston Magazine on our website www.roystonparishchurch.org.uk