

across ROYSTON

May 2026

PRAYER WALK ON THERFIELD HEATH, 9TH MAY



A morning's walk on the Heath and its surroundings, stopping for short prayers for the local community.

Meet at 10.30am at St John the Baptist Parish Church, finishes at about noon at the Old Bull for optional lunch. Just turn up at the church.

All welcome

DID YOU KNOW?

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

TRAINING SERVICE

Sometime ago I was fortunate enough to sit in on a morning in church with a class from King James Academy. Steven took them through the Eucharist Service, many joining in. He explained each step and why we did it, there were quite a few surprises!

The 10-30 service on May 7th will be such a Training Service and a chance for us all to find out a bit more. I'm sure you will find it as interesting as I did last year.

Kay



**WE HAVE A NEW BATCH
OF CHURCH MUGS FOR SALE,**

£10 each, sales go towards church funds.

Available at Saturday coffee, or after church services.

Would make great presents!

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MINISTERS MUSINGS

Dear Friends

The first of May is “National Non-human Phone and Thank Day”. If you are confused, I can rephrase that as “Phone and Thank Day...for Non-humans.”

Last year one place I know found the phones did not stop ringing! Here is a selection of the messages they received.

- A message for Simon. Your toothpaste tube phoned to say thank you very much for putting the top back on yesterday. Apparently you keep forgetting and it gets very upset.

- A message for Louise. Your bedroom phoned to say that, although it was still in a state of shock, it wants to say a really big thank you for tidying it up this weekend. It hates being messy and it is very grateful.

- A message for Rose from your dog. Apparently, he phoned to say thank you for sharing with him your feelings about life. He does understand and likes you talking to him. By the way, he does like your sister when she visits despite what you told him!

- Finally, a message for Jane from Teddy. Teddy phoned to say thank you for loving him and caring for him so much and taking him with you when you go away.

Although we laugh (hopefully!) these messages are imaginary, they do make a serious point: it really is very important to be thankful and say thank you.

Sometimes it is the very small things in life that we forget to be thankful for.

The idea behind the Non-human Phone and Thank Day came from a church minister. He thought of it when he was watering his plants. Here's what he said:

“I know how much I appreciate a glass of water, especially when I am hot, and I felt that my flowers really enjoyed being given a drink and somehow, I imagined them being grateful. Then my mind wandered to other things that might want to say thank you, if they could speak. We take too much for granted, don't we? When we turn on the tap we take it for granted that clear, clean and refreshing water is available for us. We have all heard of countries where there is a water shortage. Imagine if we had to survive the rest of this week with no water to drink, no water to wash with, being unable to flush the toilet.”

I came across this poem recently written by a 10-year-old.

"I can open my eyes and see; I can open my mouth and say thank you.

Thank you for today, for a comfortable bed, hot water, breakfast, clean clothes, my shoes.

Thank you for people who care, for milk, for post, the telephone, computers, our car, petrol.

Thank you for blue skies, for rain, my dog, flowers in our garden.

Thank you for new friends, for my grandparents.

Thank you for reading and writing. Who am I thanking?

All sorts - it doesn't matter - but saying thank you does."

When the world around us seems to be so precarious and dangerous it is easy to forget how we should be grateful.

For people who have a faith, I think it is particularly important to offer thanksgiving - to be grateful.

There is so much in the world of nature and creation that should make us thankful.

For families and friends...

We are thankful.

For the beauty of nature and the world around us...

We are thankful.

For all the things in life that we too often take for granted...

We are thankful.

Please help us to be willing to show our thanks, not only in what we say but also in what we do - each day...

We are thankful. Amen.

Be thankful.

Reg

SAINT OF THE MONTH: MAY 15TH ST. ISIDORE THE FARMER (SAN ISIDRO LABRADOR)

A medieval Spanish saint with a Royston connexion!

Isidore (c.1070-1130) was a Spanish layman known for his deep faith, humility, and dedication to agricultural work. Born at Torrelaguna near Madrid, he spent most of his life as a poor farm labourer in the service of the same landowner, John de Vergas



Despite his demanding work, Isidore was known for attending daily Mass and spending long hours in prayer. Delightful legends about him include his employer seeing a team of white oxen led by angels ploughing alongside him. He lived simply with his wife, Maria de la Cabeza who is also venerated as a saint. Together they were known for their charity toward the poor, often sharing what little food they had.

Miracles and a cult followed Isidore's death ; he is said to have guided King Alphonsus of Castile in a vision which enabled him to defeat the Moors in 1211, and in 1615 King Philip III of Spain was cured of a mortal fever after Isidore's relics were brought into his sickroom. This led to the king asking the Pope for Isidore's formal canonisation, which was granted in 1622.

Today, he is honoured as the patron saint of farmers, rural communities, and Madrid, reflecting his life of quiet holiness and hard work. Our connexion is that Royston has a twin town in Spain, Villanueva de la Cañada in the province of Madrid, and both the city of Madrid and our Twin Town have San Isidro as their patron saint – and they make a big deal about celebrating his day, 15th May! Roystonians are invited (via the Twinning) to go and join in the fiesta (Clare Davies and Martyn will be going this year, along with three others from Royston).

In Villanueva, celebrations consist of a large outdoor mass in Villanueva Park – and the sermon generally mentions some of the attributes of San Isidro – followed by a pilgrimage in which the beautifully decorated statue from the church is processed around the park followed by clergy, the band, the local uniformed organisations and the townsfolk, then a toast to the saint with a deceptively alcoholic "lemonade of the saint", followed by much food, music, dancing and a concert, in the sunshine for the rest of the day. (See photographs) The same thing happens on a bigger scale in the centre of Madrid, where many people wear traditional dress as well.



MISSION OF THE MONTH: THE BIBLE SOCIETY

The Bible Society is a global network of organisations dedicated to making the Bible accessible to people in every language and context. Founded in the early 19th century, its mission has evolved from simply distributing printed scriptures to engaging in translation, literacy, and community outreach projects around the world.



One of the Society's most significant contributions is its work in Bible translation. Many communities historically lacked access to scripture in their native languages, limiting both personal engagement and broader cultural understanding. By partnering with linguists, local speakers, and faith leaders, the Bible Society has helped translate the Bible into hundreds of languages, often preserving and developing written forms of those languages in the process.

In addition to translation, the organisation focuses heavily on distribution. This includes providing affordable or free copies of the Bible in regions where access is limited by economic or political barriers. In recent years, digital technology has expanded this reach, allowing scriptures to be shared through mobile apps and online platforms, making them more accessible than ever before.

The Bible Society also plays a role in literacy and education. In many parts of the world, learning to read is closely tied to engagement with religious texts. By supporting literacy programs, the Society not only promotes access to the Bible but also contributes to broader educational development and empowerment within communities.

Overall, the work of the Bible Society reflects a combination of religious commitment and social impact. Through translation, distribution, and education initiatives, it continues to influence millions of people worldwide, adapting its methods to meet the changing needs of a global audience.

The Bible Society is one of the missions which the Parish Church supports regularly. In 2026 we hope to send them £2,000

Duncan Rodgers



LITTER PICKING

Royston Parish Church Sustainable Living Committee



One Sunday afternoon at the end of March, various members of our church joined forces with a wider group from Royston Environmental Group to do some litter picking in the Icknield Recreation Ground/Newmarket Road area. It was a satisfying way to get some fresh air and exercise with a purpose on a rather drizzly afternoon!

We hope to participate in some more litter picking sessions in future, so keep an eye out for dates in the church newsletter if you would like to join in.

Clare Davies



Members of Royston Parish Church at the recent Litter Pick run by the Royston Environmental Group.

BEE- FRIENDLY GARDENS

May 20th is World Bee Day. It aims to raise awareness of the importance of bees in our ecosystem as pollinators, and how we need to protect them.

Did you know that bees pollinate more than 75% of the crops we eat? Without bees, the yields of fruit and vegetables would be greatly reduced, our food more scarce, and more expensive. Bees also produce honey and wax. They are fantastic creatures and need our help.

Bee populations have been reducing globally in recent years due to the loss of natural habitat, heavy use of pesticides, extreme weather and climate change.



photo: Bee on lavender, taken by Ruth Savage

Here are some simple ways that you can support bees in your garden or outside space:

- Plant native flowers that bloom in different seasons so that bees and other insects have a food source over many months
- Grow lavender, rosemary, sunflowers and wildflowers. Bees are particularly attracted to blue and purple flowers. They love the lavender plant in my garden! Plants can be grown in pots or hanging baskets on balconies if you don't have a garden.
- If you have a lawn, participate in "no-mow May", in which you leave your lawn unmown for the month of May, and the longer grass and wildflowers such as clover, daisies and buttercups provide pollen for bees, butterflies and other species.
- Avoid using chemical pesticides.
- Provide a source of water. This could be a bird bath, or a shallow container with a stone or stick in it. Bees need to "perch" on a drier area and dip their tongues into the water to drink. Gathering pollen is thirsty work and having access to water helps avoid exhaustion.

Ruth Savage

Heath Watch with Holly (the little dog)

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



April 2026

It was windy at the start of April, but the weather soon started to warm up, everything was growing, leaves growing on the trees and a close look at the ground would reveal many wild flowers, in various stages of growth, some in flower others just starting to grow and many in-between. The heath is known for the Pasque flower, which only grows in a few places around the country, I didn't get to see them this year but I understand that they were not quite as good as previously. I watched two Buzzards flying together like a dance in the air, I don't know if this was courtship or a territorial battle, I looked it up on the internet and it looks more likely that it was courtship. I watched a Kestrel hovering for a some time hoping to see it dive but I didn't this time it gave up on the prey and flew away. When Kestrels hover they fan their tail out to balance themselves and stay still in the air, it's a wonderful sight.

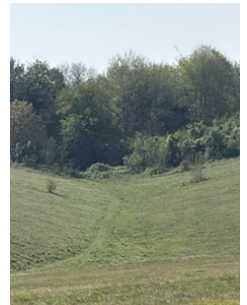


One of the problems of watching birds in the UK is that we have so many small brown birds that are hard to tell apart, Bill Oddie calls them LBBs (little brown birds). I saw such a bird and am inclined to think that it was a Whitethroat but I can't be sure. Other birds seen this time include a busy little Wren hiding in a bush a beautiful Goldfinch, Rooks making a lot of noise and, of all things, a Heron flying over, I would guess that it had come from a garden pond. I often see and hear Red kites and Buzzards, both these birds have a high pitch call that doesn't seem to suit such fierce birds of prey.

Moving on, I've noticed a good number of bumblebees this year and still enjoy looking at their markings to identify which species they are.

Rapeseed, a plant which I don't like because it causes me to have hay fever symptoms, can be found on the heath at this time of year and in our gardens, on roundabouts and any spare space on the grass verges, seeds must have blown there or been carried from nearby farms by birds or insects.

Finally, I would like to mention all the beautiful butterflies that I have seen this month. As I have said before, Holly can't walk far now so most of what I've seen this time was seen only a few yards from the



car park. I have particularly enjoyed seeing a Common Blue, a Small Blue quite a few Yellow Brimstones a Peacock Butterfly and my favourite this time an orange tip butterfly. My personal view of the local butterfly population is that the number of species remains the same but the quantity of butterflies has decline

Anthony Pigg

VEGETARIAN MEAL OPTIONS

Beth Moorley has shared this month's vegetarian recipe. She says it's really yummy!
Thank you Beth.

Layered Cashew and Mushroom Roast

Serves 6 – 8 people; 2 lb greased loaf tin; cooks at 180 degrees c

Ingredients:

1 tbsp oil;
1 onion, finely chopped;
2 cloves garlic, crushed;
8oz cashew nuts;
4oz breadcrumbs;
1 egg, beaten;
3 medium parsnips, cooked and mashed;
half a tsp dried mixed herbs;
1 tsp Marmite dissolved in quarter pint hot water;
1oz butter;
8oz mushrooms, chopped

Method:

Heat oil and fry onion and garlic until soft.
Roughly chop cashew nuts and mix with breadcrumbs.
Beat egg and add to all dry ingredients.
Mix in mashed parsnips.
Add onion and juices from pan.
Add Marmite stock.
Season well with salt and pepper.
Sauté mushrooms until soft.
Press half the breadcrumb mixture into the loaf tin.
Cover with the mushrooms.
Top with the rest of the breadcrumb mixture.
Cover with foil and bake for 1 hour.
When cooked, leave to stand for 10 minutes before removing from the tin.

Serve hot or cold.

Cath Byers

Sunday Services for May 2026

Services to be held in Royston Parish Church

Sunday 3rd May

- 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**
- 15:30 - 17:00 **Tea Time Praise with the Baptism of Ericka Rosalyn Betts**
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Sunday 10th May

- 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**
- 12:30 - 13:00 **Baptism Service for Elijah Nankivell**
- 17:00 - 18:00 **Evening Praise**
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Sunday 17th May

- 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**
- 12:30 - 13:30 **Baptism service for Katie Speller and Elizabeth Burns**
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Sunday 24th May

- 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**
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Sunday 31st May

- 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**
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