

across **ROYSTON**

September 2025



The magazine of the Church of St. John the Baptist, Royston Parish
Church, part of the worldwide Anglican Communion

HARVEST SUPPER

SATURDAY 4th OCTOBER

6:30PM in ROYSTON PARISH CHURCH

Tickets £10 individual / £25 family. Supper includes shepherds pie or vegetarian alternative, with fruit crumble for dessert.

Drinks available to buy. **Please bring own plate and bowl.**

To enable us to cater for the right numbers please book by going to <https://bit.ly/4me70Y9>

or scan the QR code or see Joanne in Church for help



Herts./Cambs.
Border
Action Group



**Would
WE walk
25 miles
to own our
own Bible?**



**A YOUNG MARY JONES
DID IN 1800**

Dr Onesimus Ngundu
(Research Assistant), our guest
speaker, will tell us more
about this remarkable story.

Dr Onesimus Ngundu looks after Bible
Society's collection of Bibles, which is housed
at Cambridge University Library.

**Friday 3 October 2025
7.30 for 7.45 pm
Melbourn Baptist Church,
Royston SG8 6DB**

There will also be refreshments, a
Thank Offering and Bring and Buy sale.
Ample free parking.

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Minister's Musings

*We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.*

This year marks the 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed of which opens with the above text. Whilst Christian creeds, statements of belief, existed prior to the Nicene Creed, what the Council of Nicaea achieved in 325 AD was a coming together of Christian leaders from across the known world to come up with a text that most Christians could say represented their beliefs, particularly in relation to how they understood Jesus as being divine, the second person of the Trinity. This text is truly formational, we recite it most weeks and it becomes part of us. We also celebrate what this creed proclaims throughout the year, such as Jesus' birth, death, resurrection, ascension, and His coming kingdom. We also celebrate the Holy Spirit, the prophets, the world-wide church, baptism, forgiveness of sin and eternal life. However, there has been one part of the Nicene Creed that the church has not historically celebrated, that is the opening text, that of God as creator.

Although the Nicene Creed starts ascribing to the Father as the "maker" of everything, this creed also recognises the whole of The Trinity as Creator, for through Jesus "all things were made" and the Holy Spirit is described as "the Lord, the giver of life". Creation is the common thread that holds the persons of The Trinity together, yet the church has not celebrated this in its yearly cycle of feasts. Yes, we have celebrated Harvest, but this is not actually part of the church year, hence why different churches will give thanks for the produce of the land at different times, albeit usually during early Autumn time. Also, Harvest is more about giving thanks for what we have received, which is not based on a statement found in the creed. Therefore, the world-wide church has been working together to form a new Christian feast, the Feast of Creation.

The Feast of Creation focuses more on the origin of creation (Genesis), the sustaining of creation (continua) and the divine, final purpose and perfection of creation (read Romans 8). This feast is celebrated over a period of time called Creationtide, which spans from 1st September every year to the 4th October, where we celebrate the life and ministry of St Francis of Assisi who was well known for his care for creation. The need for this new feast grows in importance as our understanding of our behaviours on the sustainability of creation grows. We now know that we are treading heavily on our home planet, that our actions are causing seismic repercussions on our environment, on biodiversity and on how we are going to live, especially as it will be the biggest cause of migration both human and otherwise as more of our home planet becomes inhospitable.

Taking the climate emergency seriously is fundamental to our Christian living and that is why we as a church have a Sustainable Living Committee, have a guest speaker who is an expert in this area, run courses such as Carbon Literacy for Congregations and support one another in treading on our home planet more lightly. Through this new Feast of Creation, we are invited to join our voices with the whole of creation praising its Creator, as hearts, wills, and minds are awakened to the wonder of the cosmos and the ecology of living things and are strengthened by the Holy Spirit to care for creation.

With love

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steven". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'S' being particularly large and stylized.

God our creator, whose wisdom orders all things and holds them in being. The heavens are yours and you entrust the earth to the care of humankind. As we become more aware of the climate and environment emergency, may your Spirit inspire and guide the politicians and leaders of this and every nation, that the resolve to tackle the causes of climate change may be strengthened, and words and agreements may lead to effective action, through Jesus Christ in whom the world is made anew. Amen.

CHRISTIAN OF THE MONTH: ALAN GARDINER

Commemorated by the Church of England on September 6th..

Alan Gardiner is remembered as the founder of the South American Mission Society (SAMS) and one who sacrificed his life in Tierra del Fuego as one of its first missionaries.

He was born into a Christian family in Berkshire in 1794, and like many boys of his time he yearned for adventure. He trained at the Royal Naval College in Portsmouth, served as an officer in the French/American wars 1812-1815, and had reached the rank of captain by the time he returned to Portsmouth in peacetime. He now suffered the deaths of his mother and his first wife, but also experienced a religious enlightenment, writing :*"Blessed be His name, who loved us and gave Himself for us, a great change has been wrought in my heart"*.



He travelled the world, visiting South Africa, India, Ceylon, China, Malaysia and Tahiti. On returning to London in 1834 he offered himself for missionary service and after several rejections accepted a position with Church Missionary Society (CMS) in South Africa, working amongst the Zulu people and helping to found the city of Durban.

With his second wife Elizabeth he began to focus on South America, desiring to share Christ with the Mapuches of Chile - which included a 1000-mile pony trek across the Andes from Buenos Aires to Santiago and Concepcion. However, suspicion amongst the native people and opposition from Catholic clergy thwarted his efforts.

Back in England he campaigned to raise interest in the need for taking the Gospel to South America. Eventually in 1844 he had organised a society for the work, called the Patagonian Missionary Society (re-named the South American Missionary Society in 1851). He made successful missions

with companions to Bolivia, but his sights were set on the remote far south of the continent, Tierra del Fuego, home to the Yaghan people.

Gardiner left England for the last time in 1850 on the *Ocean Queen*. With two small launches and six companions he left the ship after she had arrived in Tierra del Fuego, landing on Picton Island.

Disaster was to follow. They had difficulty engaging with the Yaghans, who resisted and attacked them. Although they had rifles, they had inexplicably left their gunpowder and shot on the departing ship, rendering the rifles useless for hunting food. They had to survive on what seafood they could scavenge on the coast.

After six months exposure to one of the worst climates in the world, sickness and hunger overtook them, and one by one they began to die. Gardiner was the last to succumb, but when the Admiralty supply ship finally arrived in late October and found his body, he had been dead for six weeks. Lying beside him they found his journal, the last entry dated September 5th., 1851 reading thus :

“If a wish had been given me for the good of my neighbour it would be that the Mission in Tierra del Fuego be pursued with vigour. But the Lord will direct and do everything because time and reason are His, your hearts are in His hands....great and marvellous are the loving kindnesses of my gracious God unto me.”

You're warmly invited to Home-Start Royston, Buntingford and South Cambridgeshire's Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, 15th October 2025.

Join us for an inspiring evening where we'll hear directly from a family who received support from Home-Start—an incredibly powerful way to understand the real impact of our work in the community. We'd love for you to be part of this special event as we reflect on the past year and look ahead to the future.

MISSION OF THE MONTH—SEPTEMBER 2025

BISHOPS OF ST. ALBANS HARVEST APPEAL

This year's appeal is called *Rewrite Their Future*, and **St. Albans Diocese** is once again partnering with **Mission Direct**. Their work in Uganda and Zambia is focused on building schools and improving access to education in some of the world's most under-resourced communities.

Within one year, these schools supported by Mission Direct will serve over 2,945 children, of whom 1,170 will be benefitting from new classrooms—and over the next 20 years, 23,400 children will gain access to education that would otherwise be out of reach. At a time when 250 million children globally are not in school, this is one small but vital way we can help change that reality.

Mission Direct's education initiatives typically include building schools, helping to attract and retain teachers in rural areas, enhancing academic performance and health due to nutrition programmes, and enabling girls to continue in education after puberty by providing better washing and sanitation facilities.

Your donation helps us continue this vital work – supporting a range of activities that enable us to *Rewrite Their Future*. Whether we are laying bricks, funding feeding programmes, providing teacher training or providing advocacy, policy and resource acquisition support – these all contribute to more children being able to go to school.

Thanks to the generosity of supporters over the last 20 years, Mission Direct have been able to build 49 schools. Nearly all of these are still open and have grown substantially.

A note from our Bishops :

As we give thanks for all that God provides, we also celebrate the incredible impact we can make when churches, chaplaincies and schools across our diocese act together in prayer, generosity and compassion. Over the past 16

years, our Harvest Appeals have raised more than £1 million, bringing lasting hope to communities around the world. This year, we invite you to help build on that legacy. We commend this appeal to you with deep gratitude for all you already do. Let's stand together once again, so more children can go to school, unlock their potential and thrive. With every blessing,

+Richard, Bishop of Bedford



+Jane, Bishop of Hertford



The Harvest Appeal Prayer

God of grace and mercy, whose Son, Jesus Christ, demonstrated his love through acts of compassion and offers freedom from the things that hold us back: we pray your blessing on the schools and families of Zambia and Uganda. May we, your Church, overflow with compassion and generosity as we support efforts to help children to free themselves from poverty through education. And may your good news of hope and salvation touch ever more people into a relationship with you, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.



Heath Watch with Holly (the little dog)

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



July and August 2025

It was very hot at the start of July and everywhere was dry, Red Kites were visible all the time and I enjoyed watching them spiral on the thermal air currents often in pairs. As I have said many times before I do enjoy seeing the Wood Pigeons one peculiar characteristics of this species



is that you can get quite close without them flying away; seen closely they have the most beautiful colouring and the blue/green collar is quite iridescent. Although I did see a lot of grasshoppers there are much fewer now than I remember as a child and I haven't seen any crickets at all this year. There were a good number of butterflies though, and I saw a lot of Small Heath, a lovely butterfly with markings of shades of brown and orange. The weather was by now very hot and dry. I think I mentioned in my last article that there was a lot of

blackberries this year; now they are ripening. Blackberrying used to be a frequent activity, and were the main ingredient of Blackberry and apple crumble, which was such a treat. It's not the same now our food comes from supermarkets, cleaned and in packets.

The Wood Pigeons could be heard all the time, their song sounding like "my toe bleeds Betty, my toe bleeds Betty" repeated over and over again but strangely it always ends on "my toe". On the 20th and for a few days after many Tiger Moths were on all kinds of vegetation, they must have emerged from their chrysalises at the same time. Another frequent sight this month has been dragon and damsel flies; I am both pleased and concerned to see them, their colours and flight pattern are delightful, but they live by water and shouldn't be here, the drought has obviously made them



search widely for water, they were always near the main road so I think they may have been attached to garden ponds.

One wildflower that has been particularly successful this year is the Common Toadflax which I know as “butter and eggs” because of the two shades of yellow in the flowers, I do dislike the use of the word “common” when describing frequently observed species it does detract from their beauty.



Moving on now to August. From the 1st of the month there were the first signs of Autumn, the seasons are changing. The sun was often low, and the glare uncomfortable, I recalled Keat’s poem “To Autumn” where he describes Autumn as *the close bosom friend of the maturing sun*. There was a welcome cold breeze early in the month and then a return to the hot weather. I noticed a lot of stinging nettles, they used to be gathered as food, but I can’t remember how they were used. Nettles

are a vital part of the ecology and shouldn’t be dismissed as an unpleasant weed. I don’t often mention the sky or cloud formations; I usually look down rather than up! but one day I did notice a beautiful mackerel sky.

I saw some pretty Japanese Anemones which I guess were self-set from nearby gardens.

By the 20th of the month the chestnut trees were changing to autumn colours and the conkers forming, it was still dry, and the golf club’s machinery made a lot of dust, rose hips (another food source that was gathered for its vitamin C) were bright and autumnal. The seasons were changing, and I am looking forward to the colours of Autumn.

More next time.....

Sunday Services for September 2025

Services to be held in Royston Parish Church

Sunday 7th September

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 - 16:00	Tea Time Praise (a short service for children & families followed by cake)

Sunday 14th September

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 - 17:00	Royal Airforce Association, Battle of Britain Service

Sunday 21st September

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

Sunday 28th September

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
15:00 - 21:00	Finale Concert Arts Festival