

MINISTER OF MUSIC

**THE PRIORY & PARISH CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST
ROYSTON (HERTFORDSHIRE)**

VACANCY INFORMATION



Remuneration: £8 500, plus fees from weddings & funerals, with the opportunity to earn up to £14 750 plus fees if music outreach activities were taken on.

Contract: Permanent, subject to an enhanced DBS check, safeguarding training and references

Closing date: Friday 16th October 2026, 12pm

Interview dates: The evenings of Wednesday 21st October or 4th November 2026 (candidates will only need to attend one of these).

Commencement date of post: January 2027, although an earlier start is possible.

**Contact for questions or to arrange an informal chat: Revd Steven Sivyver
vicar@roystonparishchurch.org.uk**

INTRODUCTION FROM THE VICAR

Dear Candidate, I am delighted that you are interested in this exciting post as Minister of Music at The Priory & Parish Church of St John the Baptist. St John's is the only parish church serving the community of Royston, so it enjoys a broad range of prayer and worshipping styles, and music plays an important part in that diversity. Therefore, we are looking for someone who is fed spiritually by their engagement in music, and is able to offer leadership through music that is from various Christian traditions.



We have given this position the title of *Minister of Music*, because we see the work of this role as a ministry, taking place within the wider ministry of the church and of God. Music a key vehicle through which the grace and love of God is encountered, so the person appointed to this role will show Christ through the way they interact with people. As is explored later in this document, the Minister of Music need not be an organist, but they should be able to lead people in worship musically from both the piano and the organ (please see the section about the organ). The Minister of Music will also be a person who nurtures and encourages others' spirituality in their own music-making, whether through singing or the playing of instruments.

There is an opportunity to extend this work further into the community and drawing the community further into the church through the use of musical activities. We have a budget for this work which, due to the nature of this role taking place during the working week, can either be led by someone else, or could be included as part of the work of the Minister of Music for an additional remuneration. Further details about this are included in this document.

The Minister of Music will be supported in this ministry by myself as the vicar, an organist who used to be a Director of Music. I know how important it is to have a good relationship between the professional musician and the clergy, and I am willing to be as supportive as needed, whether that is to be on hand, accompany the choir etc, or to stay away at a distance. I am also willing to play for a communion service every month so that the successful applicant can enjoy a regular Sunday away from their duties. They will be regarded as a leader in the life of Royston Parish Church, working with others to further its mission to be a blessing to the community it serves. Although a committed Christian faith is not absolutely essential to the role, it is important, and it is essential that music helps to nurture the successful applicant's own Christian spirituality, and that they recognise that they not only represent a lived out Christian faith, but that their ministry is to use music to build up and nourish the faith of the church community, as well as developing the spirituality of the wider community.

Applications for this post can be made by sending me the application form with two referees and a statement explaining how you see yourself fulfilling this role to my email listed on the cover by the deadline. We can be a little flexible regarding when we can run the interview process (note the dates on the cover of this booklet) as we are more concerned about finding the right person or people for this role than running a timed process. If you feel inspired to apply for this role, I look forward to receiving your application and I am very happy to have an informal discussion at any point during the process.

Warmest regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steven". The signature is stylized with a large 'S' and a cursive 't'.

The Revd Dr Steven Sivy
Vicar of Royston

ABOUT ST JOHN'S CHURCH AND ITS CONTEXT

Royston is a market town located on the border between Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire. It is also between the M11 and A1(M) and on the train line, making Cambridge, London and beyond a short distance away. As a result of this, many people living in Royston commute, although many also work in Royston, in its shops or industrial area as well as working from home. Surrounded by countryside, the area of Royston is easily defined which, with its town centre, contributes towards a strong sense of community.



St John's is the sole parish church for Royston, located at the heart of the town, and is at the heart of the community in which it is placed. It is made up of a vibrant and friendly congregation, representative of the diverse population of the parish. We love that those in our church community are varied in terms of age, race, social background, personal circumstances, political leanings, sexuality, gender identity and spirituality. Questioning minds are welcome and we appreciate that nurturing faith also includes recognising and exploring people's doubts. The church uniquely draws together in one community differing demographics of people who might otherwise not know each other, as well as different expressions of the Christian faith. Some people identify as Baptists, others as Catholics and in between, but they have in common a faithfulness to God, exploring the big questions of life and developing their relationship with Christ.

Regular attendance on Sundays are around 30 for a said Communion at 9am, and around 100 including children and families for a sung Communion at 10.30am. This figure swells to around 400 people for some services such as the Christmas Carol Service. We also have a monthly Tea Time Praise service which attracts a congregation of around 50 people, and occasional distinctive services such as Choral Eucharist, Choral Evensong or Taizé services.

The church had a fire in December 2018, and those who rebuilt its interior did so with great vision, to build a church for the future. The interior is bright and light, is flexible and, with underfloor heating, is warm during the winter. The Vicar left just as the church began to return to the restored church building in February 2023, with the new Vicar starting in October 2023. As someone who has worshipped and worked with music for much of his life, he understands how important good-quality music is in developing people's spirituality, and is committed to supporting the development of music in the life of the church and its community.

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC OUTREACH

Royston enjoys a strong history of music making, with musicians such as Alison Balsom growing up here. However, more recently through events such as the pandemic, our local education losing its sixth form provision and now our local council's music service has moved out from Royston, our music-making opportunities for younger people in Royston threatens our community's strength in music. We, as a church, want to bring the successes that choral engagement programmes bring in other parts of the country to Royston, to engage children in good-quality music making, mostly through choral singing, and also provide an opportunity for those young people who are progressing well in music to come together and perform in Royston. Much of this work may well take place through assisting our four first schools and our through school (years 5-11), and we see that the parish church, the largest building in our community, provides a place where this work in the schools can come together, so that people can make music together across the community. We also wish to build a community song book, so that when the community comes together, it can unite through music. Initial conversations with the school have been positive about this vision.

We seek an inspirational and excellent musician to build on the music making that is already taking place within the church, and also to lead the wider community role. The aspect of the post particularly requires an entrepreneurial and pioneering spirit that will relish the opportunity to create and shape this new venture. Resilience and flexibility will be essential to embrace the challenge of starting something new as opposed to inheriting an established project. The person leading this aspect of the role must have a passion for choral music not only for its own sake, but also as a conduit for growing community, enhancing worship and enriching people's lives. They will enjoy working with children from diverse backgrounds and nurturing those with little or no musical training, to develop in capability and confidence as singers, as well as working with more experienced and confident singers.

This work has already begun, where our previous Minister of Music, combining this Director of Music Outreach role into his work, has been leading the weekly hymn assemblies in one of our first schools, and workshops in our through school. More recently this work has been continued by someone who has taken on this role as the schools are keen to continue this work with us, and we are keen to extend this work into the other schools. This person is undertaking the role on a temporary basis but is happy to take this on a more permanent basis. Therefore, either this work can continue to be done through this person or the Minister of Music can add this work to their role for additional remuneration. As this work is largely through schools, it takes place during the school day (for example, the weekly hymn assemblies are on Wednesdays at 10am). We do not wish for this work to exclude candidates who are not able to commit to this due to other work commitments, so we are entirely open as to whether the successful candidate is one who can perform this outreach role or not, but we would expect any Minister of Music who was not able to perform this aspect of the role to work well with the person undertaking this.

MUSIC AT ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, ROYSTON PARISH CHURCH



The church has a new Viscount 2 manual organ, a choir and an occasional worship band. The organ is very versatile and can support most repertoire to be performed on it, offering assistance such as a stepper. The organ also has an “Automatic Pedal” function, meaning that the lowest note depressed on the manual also sounds on the pedals. This allows pianists to accompany hymns in a way that it can sound as if an organist is accompanying including the use of their feet. This also means that we are able to offer this post to someone who is a competent pianist even if they are not an organist. We are looking for someone who has the ability to accompany both traditional hymns and more modern Christian songs and to accompany the choir and other groups of musicians on both the organ and the piano. Their ability to draw others into worship through music is valued more than simply a musical gift.



The choir, made up of 12 regular adult singers with others joining occasionally, and 5 children have recently been added to the front line. The choristers start at 6pm on Wednesdays and the adults join them from 6.45 – 8pm to rehearse (with the choristers leaving at 7.30pm). They also meet to warm up and rehearse at 10am, ready to lead the worship at the 10.30 Communion services every week. The TrebleMakers, a choir for infant-aged children, currently meet following the 10.30am services on Sundays, and sings for occasional services such as Mothering Sunday or Harvest, and they sing a piece during the Carol Service. The choir also leads the worship at other services such as occasional Choral Evensong. For example, the last Choral Evensong included responses by Sanders, a setting by Stanford (in C) and the anthem was Sumsion’s They, that go down to the sea in ships. David Goode kindly accompanied on the organ and the congregation numbered just over 40.

A band consisting of a pianist, two guitarists, a bass guitarist, drummer and vocals leads the worship at the monthly TeaTime Praise (2.45 rehearsal for a 3.30pm service), a service focused on serving families with young children. The role of the Minister of Music here is to engage with the band and encourage others to develop as members of the band. For example, the drummer has been developed from being a young person who attended the services. Just as the Minister of Music may develop a chorister's singing voice, they would be expected to develop the ensemble playing of someone in a band.

We are at the early stages of planning occasional contemporary praise-styled evening services that will also be led by this band (three services a year). We also have Taizé services (around three a year) which is served by a different group of instrumentalists (mainly acoustic instrumentalists such as recorder and viola) who, together, lead this worship. Again, the role of the Minister of Music would be to encourage and nurture others in their engagement of playing Taizé chants.

To summarise, without the outreach aspect of the role, the Minister of Music is expected on Sunday mornings to start at 10am with the choir rehearsal for the service at 10.30am which is followed by the TrebleMakers until around 12.15pm (although the Vicar is able to cover this on a monthly basis in addition to any leave the Minister of Music is entitled to if they would like to take that time). In addition to this, there is a monthly commitment to supporting the band for TeaTime Praise services (2.45pm rehearsal for 3.30pm service) and then there are other occasional services such as a Choral Evensong or Eucharist, Evening Praise service, Taizé service or other services such as All Souls' or the Advent or Christmas Carol services (around 10 of these services a year). In addition to these Sunday services, there is a weekly commitment to the choir practices on Wednesdays (6-8pm) and evening services on Ash Wednesday, Ascension Day and Christmas Eve. If the outreach aspect of the role was included in the work of the successful applicant, then there will also be commitments during the usual working week, led by the needs of our local schools. This work would attract additional remuneration as does any playing for services such as funerals or weddings.

The Church Family's Top 10

To give a further indication of where the church family is in their preferences for music, we recently held a music survey including finding out what was our favourite hymns and Christian songs. We then held a 'Scones of Praise' service where we revealed the church family's top 10 which are:

1	O Lord my God
2	In Christ alone
3	Dear Lord and Father of Mankind
4	Amazing grace
5	I, the Lord of Sea and Sky
6	Be still for the presence of the Lord
7	Great is thy faithfulness
8	Lord, the light of your live is shining
9	From heaven you came
10	Praise, my soul, the king of heaven



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Minister of Music

Remuneration: £8 500 (or up to £14,750 if the successful candidate chose to undertake the schools and community outreach work as well) + weddings & funerals etc (there are around six weddings and fifteen funerals a year with a current fee of £150 for each service).

This is an employed role, so the successful applicant will be paid subject to tax and National Insurance deductions. As an employee, the successful applicant would be entitled to a range of statutory benefits including six weeks paid leave per year, sick pay, parental leave and a Stakeholder Pension.

Employer: The Parochial Church Council of St John the Baptist, Royston Parish Church (Hertfordshire)

Time commitment: Two and a half hours on Sunday mornings, occasional services on Sunday afternoons or evenings and Wednesday early evenings for choir practices. Some additional time is needed for contact with singers, musicians and for musical admin. Extra services and events at certain points in the year as outlined in schedule below with time given back in lieu at other points in the year (weeks spent away from the parish should be outside of term time, Christmas and Easter). Extra Sundays off are negotiable with the Vicar and may be taken in lieu of time in schools and the community. An example of a Sunday morning may involve: 10am rehearsal with the choir followed by the Sung Communion service from 10.30 to 11.40am followed by The TrebleMakers from 11.45 to 12.15. There may be periods when the postholder feels the need to work more hours and would then take time back in lieu at less busy times. You will have the ability to shape the pattern in consultation with the Vicar. (If the outreach work is also being undertaken then there is the expectation of working for up to 12 hours per week (including the hours mentioned above), 46 weeks per year, to include school term time in agreement with the Vicar.)

Schedule of extra services and events throughout the year: Advent Carol Service, Candlemas, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Eve, All Souls, Christmas Carol Service, Blue Christmas Service, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day in the morning. There are also other occasions where we have a Choral Evensong or another form of service.

Contract: Permanent (with 6-month probationary period).

Base location: The Priory and Parish Church of St John the Baptist, Melbourn Street, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 7BP

Reporting to: The Vicar of Royston Parish Church as the line manager. There is also a HR Committee of the Parochial Church Council who will review pay and support the post holder should any grievance arise.

Job purpose: To pioneer our music programme. Through this the post holder will:

- Enrich the worship at St John's and contribute towards its growth through the encouragement of singing and provision of musical opportunities.
- Bring the gifts of a high quality, accessible and engaging musical education to local children, many of whom would not otherwise receive them.
- Promote and improve singing among the congregation of the church.
- Increase inclusion and participation in church life of families in the local community through the Choristers, The TrebleMakers and through any forms of music making.

Key Duties:

The role covers a wide range of responsibilities as outlined below (these may be adjusted from time to time as required, in negotiation with the Vicar):

- Subject to the general direction of the Vicar, be responsible for the care and oversight of all the music in the church, ensuring that it is in line with liturgical practices and the expectations of the Parish.
- Play the organ and piano for services.
- Recruit, train and develop the church choir.
- Establish, recruit, train and develop a children's choir, which may also integrate with the church choir.
- Maintain and develop relationships with local schools, and work closely with staff at schools to develop a collaborative approach to supporting choristers, ensuring streams of recruitment and mechanisms for referring pupils to the choirs.
- Work closely with parents and volunteers, encouraging their support of the choir.
- Communicate regularly with parents, schools, and other stakeholders as appropriate, in collaboration with other staff and volunteers, promoting the choirs in the community.
- Ensure that the music programme complies with the church's Safeguarding policy, and that a strong safeguarding culture is maintained at all times.
- Recruit, train and develop instrumental playing in worship, particularly amongst young people.
- Work closely with those who lead the band and Taizé worship, recognising and celebrating that all styles of music work in partnership to develop different peoples' spirituality
- Undertake necessary admin to successfully manage and resource the music programme.
- Work with the Vicar and Parish Administrator in arranging cover of suitably skilled deputies for periods of agreed absence.
- Jointly manage the music budget with Vicar.
- Undertake own administration and correspondence and attend relevant meetings as required, including a monthly meeting with the Vicar and other relevant officers.
- Foster a culture within the choirs that supports the mission and values of the church – in particular, encouraging collaboration, integration and progression among the choirs.
- Any other reasonable duties relating to this post as may be requested by the Vicar.



Person Specification

Essential requirements, skills and characteristics:

They will be a role model who leads engaging and focussed rehearsals to inspire a love of singing. They will employ effective behavioural management techniques, have a due regard for good safeguarding practice and professionalism, and be at ease with working with people of differing abilities and needs. Strong interpersonal skills are essential to build good relationships with the children and their families. Good organisational and efficient communication skills will be utilised to maximise participation and attendance.

- An excellent musician and choral practitioner who is passionate about church music.
- The ability and desire to inspire and work well with children from diverse backgrounds and foster their musical development.
- A desire to bring the joy of choral music to those with little musical training and nurture their competence and confidence.
- An inclusive approach to enjoy running a congregational choir of mixed musical ability and build up the confidence of congregation members in singing.
- Someone who is able to work with and get the best out of people (including children) with Special Educational Needs
- Someone with an understanding of the place of music within worship and the liturgy.
- Previous experience of singing or directing music in a church of any denomination.
- Someone who can embrace our church's ethos and share the vision of the PCC that music is a strong conduit for church growth.
- Strong people skills and approachability with a desire to get to know the congregation and integrate within the church community.
- Ability to work independently, to use initiative and be entrepreneurial.
- Good keyboard skills to lead rehearsals without an accompanist.
- A due regard for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and to follow all associated child protection and safeguarding policies as adopted by the Diocese and parish.

Desirable skills and characteristics:

- Ability to play the organ, although for an outstanding choral practitioner, adequate keyboard skills to run rehearsals without accompaniment are sufficient.
- Graduate level music qualification.
- Sense of humour.
- Openness to and engagement in a range of church music.

Equal opportunities, Anti-Racism & LGBTQ+

St John the Baptist, Royston Parish Church, is committed to achieving equal opportunities in the way we deliver services to the community and in our employment arrangements. We have already authorised the use of Prayers of Love and Faith, including as stand-alone services when this becomes permitted by the Church of England. We expect all employees to be committed to the flourishing of all people in our diverse community.

Safeguarding

St John the Baptist, Royston Parish Church, is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults, and expects all staff and volunteers to regard Safeguarding as paramount. An enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check as well as safeguarding training is a requirement of this post.

