

Christ Church Hilderstone

# PARISH MAGAZINE



*A celebration of village life*

**Autumn Edition 2024**

# WHAT'S ON:

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## SEPTEMBER:

Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup>	W.I.	12.30pm – 3pm	Village Hall
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup>	Churchyard Tidy-Up	10am – 12 midday	Christ Church
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Harvest Festival</b>	11.15am – 12.15pm	Christ Church
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Harvest Supper With charity auction & bar	7pm – 10.30pm	Village Hall
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Concert Meeting	7.30pm – 9.30pm	Village Hall
Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup>	Community Café	10am – 1pm	Village Hall
	Pop-Up Pub With food by Untamed Grill	5pm – 10.30pm	Village Hall
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup>	United Benefice Service	11.15am – 12.15pm	Christ Church

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## OCTOBER:

Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup>	W.I. 90 <sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration	12.30pm – 3pm	Village Hall
Saturday 19 <sup>th</sup>	Village Dinner	7.00 – 10.30pm	Village Hall
Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup>	Churchyard Tidy-Up	10am – 12 midday	Christ Church
	Community Café	10am – 1pm	Village Hall
	Pop-up Pub With food by Staffordshire Burger Bar	5pm – 10.30pm	Village Hall

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## NOVEMBER:

Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Remembrance Day Service</b> <b>NOTE CHANGE OF TIME</b>	10.45am – 11.45am	Christ Church
Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup>	W.I.	12.30pm – 3pm	Village Hall
Saturday 30 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Market & Café	10am – 1pm	Village Hall
Pop-Up Pub	5pm – 10.30pm With food by Caribbean Catering		Village Hall

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## DECEMBER:

Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Tree Festival	10am – 2pm	Christ Church
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Tree Festival	2pm – 4pm	Christ Church
	Carol Service	4pm – 5pm	Christ Church
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup>	W.I.	12.30pm – 3pm	Village Hall
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup>	Hilderstone Christmas Concert		
	Matinee	3pm – 4pm	Village Hall
	Evening performance, with bar	7pm – 10pm	Village Hall
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup>	Family Crib Service	4pm – 5pm	Christ Church
	Midnight Mass	9.45pm	Christ Church

*Dates & Times may change. Please check in advance of an event.*

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## Helping you Keep in Touch with Events:

### Christ Church, Hilderstone:

Vicar	Rev'd Lucinda Wray-Wear	Tel: 01782 397073
Churchwarden	Audrey Stringer	Tel: 01889 505638

### Parish Council:

Parish Clerk	Nikola Evans	Tel: 07971 226170
	Email: <a href="mailto:clerk@hilderstone.staffslc.gov.uk">clerk@hilderstone.staffslc.gov.uk</a>	
	Website: <a href="http://www.hilderstone.org.uk">www.hilderstone.org.uk</a>	

### Hilderstone W. I.:

President	12.30pm- 3pm 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month, Village Hall.	
	Mrs Gill Slater	Tel: 07935 999424
	Email: <a href="mailto:hilderstonewipresident@gmail.com">hilderstonewipresident@gmail.com</a>	

### Hilderstone Village Hall:

Bookings:	Hallmaster booking service (on web site)	
		Tel: 07810 332559

Email: [hilderstonevhbookings@gmail.com](mailto:hilderstonevhbookings@gmail.com)

Facebook @HVH60, Twitter @hvh50,  
Instagram [hilderstone\\_village\\_hall](#)  
Web Site [www.hilderstonevillagehall.com](http://www.hilderstonevillagehall.com).

**Staffs. County Councillor:**

Ian Parry                                      Tel: 07831 510381    Email: [ian.parry@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ian.parry@staffordshire.gov.uk)

**Stafford Borough Councillor:**

Karine Aspin                                      Tel: 07498 325374    Email: [Kaspin@staffordbc.gov.uk](mailto:Kaspin@staffordbc.gov.uk)

**V.I.N. (Village Information Network):**

*This email service notifies those on the mailing list of events, news, etc in the village or affecting those living here. Contact: [richard.pilcher1@btinternet.com](mailto:richard.pilcher1@btinternet.com).*

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## What's going on locally?

How do you keep abreast of what's going on locally? We don't have a local paper. Local radio isn't what it was. This excellent Parish Magazine only comes out quarterly. So where do you find things out?

Well, for most of us of a certain age, it's either word of mouth or Facebook.

Hilderstone Village Hall has a Facebook page, so does Fradswell (Fradswell Community Hub) and Fulford Parish Council. There are plenty of others, including the excellent 'A Little Bit of Stone'. And if your focus is on Hilderstone past and present, you might like to look at Hilderstone Heritage, which is run by 'local lad' Martin Philips

You might not know about **Hilderstone News and Forum**. This is a local group aiming to reach people in and around Hilderstone. You can join by answering the three admission questions and then you can find out about local businesses and events.

There are changes coming soon so join the group and let's see how we can keep ourselves and each other informed about local matters.

## From Your Parish Council



We continue to work hard to maintain the village and are pleased to inform you that we have installed three new planters on Roe Buck Bank. They will soon be completed with some lovely new plants!

We are asking if there is anything you would like to suggest as future projects? Unfortunately, we are unable to accept anything highways related.

Contact our clerk, Nikola Evans, to pass your suggestions on to the Parish Council for consideration:

Email: [clerk@hilderstone.staffslc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@hilderstone.staffslc.gov.uk)

Tel: 07971 226170.

### VILLAGE HALL LOTTERY DRAW WINNERS:

#### May:

Ball:	28	£100
	44	£ 50
	56	£ 25
	19	£ 10
	57	£ 10

#### June:

Ball:	89	£100
	87	£ 75
	84	£ 50
	27	£ 40
	1	£ 30

Get your winnings quicker by giving us account details for where you would like them transferred. Email: [hilderstonevillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:hilderstonevillagehall@gmail.com).

Confidentiality assured!

*July & August draws will take place at the  
September Hilderstone Village Hall Meeting.*

## HILDERSTONE W.I.



It perhaps comes as no surprise that the Hilderstone branch of the Women's Institute has been its usual busy self.

Pictured (LEFT), is the Chairman of the Hilderstone W.I. outside the Albert Hall, at the National Annual Meeting of the Women's Institute.

The group also produced some stunning entries for the Staffordshire County Show, where the theme was Alice in Wonderland (RIGHT).

After a busy few months, the members deserved a well-earned rest, as seen at their summer afternoon tea outing (BELOW RIGHT) before continuing with their busy schedule. Plans include their 90th birthday celebration in October, and they have been asked to do the church flowers in October too.



The W.I. will, once again, be producing a display in Christ Church on 10<sup>th</sup> November, to mark Remembrance Day, with a few new additions for this year.





# Harvest Supper

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2024**

7pm for 7.30pm

at Hilderstone Village Hall

with the auction of produce afterwards

Cost of tickets: Adults £10.00 Children £5.00

Tickets available from **Phil Davies** on **01785 747836**

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**Recycle 4 Charity**

Help us raise money for our village church and reduce landfill by recycling your empty Inkjet cartridges.

There is a box inside church for your donations.  
Alternatively, if you need your donation to be collected,  
please call Phil Davies on 01785 747836.

We have raised over £58.80 since 2022.

Thank you for all your support.

## From Your Village Hall

### Village Dinner - Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2024, 7pm – 10.30pm

Our next Village Dinner is in October. This year's theme is 'Down The Ages' so pick a decade, cook some typical food from that time, and dress up for the occasion! Tables cost £35 each and, as usual, there'll be a glass of Prosecco for you on arrival.

There's live singing from Joni Talks.

So for a table of eight, you can enjoy a welcoming glass of Prosecco and a live singer for less than a fiver each!

On top of that, we're going to discount full bottles of wine (70cl bottles). Pre-order your bottles, and you'll get a 20% discount. Order full bottles on the night, and you'll get a 10% discount.

**Our usual prices are:** House Red £12, House White £12 and Prosecco £16.

All other drinks are priced as normal. The bar will be open and we'll be stocking our usual variety of drinks - don't forget that our ales, lagers, and ciders are from Staffordshire brewers (with one notable German exception). *To book a table for 6-8 people and to pre-order your full bottles of wine, please email us at [hilderstonevillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:hilderstonevillagehall@gmail.com).*

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### Hilderstone Christmas Concert: Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> December

What is Christmas in Hilderstone without our fabulous Christmas Show? There will be a matinee performance, 3pm – 4pm, followed by an evening performance from 7pm – 10pm (with bar). Please see the Village Hall Facebook Page for booking details.



For all those wishing to take part in our show, please note we will be holding a meeting on **TUESDAY 24<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.** Please come along if you're interested in performing in the concert as an actor or singer. This year the Christmas Choir will also be part of the event.

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## Live Theatre! Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2025, 7.30pm.

Page2Stage Creatives presents 'Life's Little VicToms'.

We've booked a live theatre company who will present 'Life's Little VicToms', a comedy by Stephen Powell. Follow married couple Vicky and Tom as they navigate life together.

Directed by Kelly-Marie Singleton, this show received rapturous welcomes at Tittensor and Oulton Village Halls. Please join us to give this comic duo a real, genuine, Hilderstone welcome!

*Tickets are £12 each. Save the date! More details to come.*

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**The Community Hub** continues to take place from 10am – 1pm on the last Saturday of the month, offering cooked breakfast from local suppliers. This community event offers a great opportunity to people from in and around our village to meet up and to sit and chat with friends – old and new, whilst also supporting local producers. We believe giving such opportunities to congregate is so important, as there are few chances for us all to meet outside of our homes and enjoy a sense of community with others. We would urge locals therefore to continue to support this café.

**The Pop-Up Pubs** will also be running from 5pm – 10.30pm on the last Saturday of the month (see the What's On section for a list of food vendors each month). This has proven a popular event amongst villagers: for young families, the late afternoon opening provides the ideal time for their children to play with friends whilst the parents enjoy a drink as they wait for their food to be cooked by our guest caterer; others make an evening of it, having a leisurely drink from the bar and choosing to eat their meal from the food vendor in the Village Hall with friends and family.



### **What do you use the Village Hall for?**

As you can see from the events listed above, our Village Hall is a great place for a get-together and, of course, special parties. But what else? We have, over recent years, not only refurbished the hall, but installed an excellent sound

system and video facilities. So why not hire the hall for family film nights or enjoy watching that special sports event? There are no loud distractions you often get in a pub which is broadcasting the football, rugby or golf; you have the benefit of having the hall to yourselves, with a fully-equipped kitchen and all the other facilities you could wish for. Alternatively, for those who like to have a large family gathering around the dining room table, there is the option of hiring the hall and inviting the whole family round without the space restrictions many of us have at home.

We are fortunate to have an excellent village hall which was set up to enhance the lives of those in our village. And, whilst we will continue to put on events for the village on a regular basis and encourage classes, such as Taekwondo and yoga, the hall can also be used by families and groups of friends to host a wide range of private functions. If you are interested in holding an event in the village hall, please go to our website ([www.hilderstonevillagehall.com](http://www.hilderstonevillagehall.com)) and click on Contacts & Bookings to see availability and place a booking.



BRITISH WILDLIFE

# WORDSEARCH



Are you a wise old owl?

Try our puzzle and find out.

X	K	S	Q	U	I	R	R	E	L
F	I	E	L	D	M	O	U	S	E
A	U	H	Z	A	O	R	F	O	X
B	B	E	H	U	L	A	F	Y	E
N	D	D	K	H	E	B	O	L	N
R	E	G	D	A	B	B	O	O	F
R	A	E	O	R	N	I	W	E	T
U	C	H	P	E	I	T	L	A	W
F	R	O	G	L	E	O	P	E	E
S	I	G	D	E	V	Q	R	F	N

Badger  
Hedgehog  
Rabbit  
Hare

Fieldmouse  
Mole  
Squirrel  
Frog

Fox  
Owl  
Newt  
Vole

# John's Traditional Greek Galaktoboureko

## (Greek Custard Pie with Syrup)

*Those who attended Hazel's Comedy Night may well have sampled this wonderful dessert: it is truly delicious and very indulgent!*

### Ingredients:

#### Base Ingredients

- 450g phyllo pastry (14 oz/12 sheets) – also called Filo pastry
- 230g butter (8 oz)

#### For the Custard

- 160g finely ground (thin) semolina (6 oz)
- 220g sugar (7.5 oz)
- 500g milk (17.6 oz)
- 4 eggs (separated into whites and yolks)
- 30g butter (1 oz)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 500g double (heavy) cream (17.6 oz)

#### For the Syrup

- 325g water (11.4 oz)
- 575g sugar (20.2 oz)
- 1 large tbsp honey
- peel of 1 lemon
- a cinnamon stick
- 10 drops of the lemon juice

### Instructions:

1. To make this Galaktoboureko recipe, start by preparing the syrup. Into a small pan add the sugar, water, lemon peel, cinnamon stick and lemon and bring to the boil. Let it boil just until the sugar has dissolved. Remove the pan from the stove, add the honey and stir. Leave the syrup aside to cool completely.
2. Prepare the custard for the Galaktoboureko (steps 3-8).

3. Pour the milk, cream and 120g of the sugar into a saucepan and bring to the boil. (Don't whisk the mixture. The sugar at the bottom of the pan protects the milk from burning.) Allow it to heat up slowly and as soon as it comes to the boil add the semolina and the vanilla extract, whilst whisking.

Turn the heat down to a medium heat and whisk constantly until the mixture becomes creamy. Remove the pan from the stove, add a knob of butter and fold. Let it cool down until warm (50°C/120°F) to prevent your mixture from curdling when you fold in the eggs. Just remember to whisk it once in a while.

4. Divide the eggs into yolks and whites. In this Galaktoboureko recipe, the egg whites are beaten into meringues and combined in the semolina-based cream. This is the secret to a more fluffy and creamy custard and to avoid the egg smell, which can ruin the flavour of your Galaktoboureko.
5. Place the egg whites and 50g sugar in a mixing bowl. Make sure your egg whites, bowl and whisk attachment/s are free of any water. Use an electric mixer or electric hand beaters to whisk the egg whites and sugar until the mixture is very thick and glossy, all the sugar has dissolved and a long trailing peak forms when the whisk is lifted (meringues). Set aside.
6. In another bowl, whisk the yolks and 50g of sugar, until the mixture is thick and foamy. This should take about 5 minutes.
7. With a spatula, add 1/4 of the meringues into the egg yolks-sugar mixture and blend with light circular movements from the bottom up. Gradually add all the meringues into the mixture and fold.
8. Fold together the two mixtures, from step 3 and step 7, and set aside.
9. For this Galaktoboureko recipe, you need a large baking tray, approx. 25x32cm. Melt 230g of butter (low heat) and butter the bottom and sides of the tray. Remove the phyllo roll from the plastic sleeve. You will use six sheets of phyllo for the bottom of the Galaktoboureko.
10. Begin by layering the sheets one by one on the bottom of the tray, making sure to sprinkle each one thoroughly with melted butter. Layer

four sheets of phyllo so that they extend half in the pan and half out of the pan horizontally and vertically and two more in the middle.

11. Tip in the custard, smoothing the surface with a spatula and fold the phyllo sheet flaps over the custard. Sprinkle with melted butter.
  12. Add six sheets on top, sprinkling each sheet with melted butter. With a knife trim some of the excessive phyllo and use your pastry brush to help you turn the phyllo inwards, towards the bottom of the pan to seal the Galaktobourekos.
  13. Score the top of the Galaktobourekos phyllo pieces with a sharp knife. Cut down until the knife reaches the cream.
  14. Pour over the remaining butter. Sprinkle with a little water.
  15. Bake in a preheated oven at 160°C for 60 to 75 minutes until the phyllo is crisp and golden.
  16. As soon as the Galaktobourekos is ready, slowly ladle the cold syrup over the pastry. (Hot Galaktobourekos, cold syrup).
  17. Serve after the syrup is absorbed.
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## Cooks Tips: Chocolate Gingerbread

*A firm favourite as the nights draw in.*

### Ingredients:

175g butter	2 tsp ground ginger
125g dark muscovado sugar	1 ¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda
2 tbsp caster sugar	2 eggs
200g golden syrup	250ml milk
200g black treacle	275g plain flour
¼ tsp ground cloves	40g cocoa powder
1 tsp ground cinnamon	175g chocolate chips



### **For the icing**

30g Butter  
1 tbsp cocoa powder  
250g icing sugar

### **Method:**

In a decent size saucepan melt the butter, along with the sugar, golden syrup, treacle and spices.

In a cup dissolve the bicarbonate of soda in 2 tablespoons of warm water.

Take the saucepan off the heat and beat in the eggs, milk, and bicarb solution.

Stir in the flour and cocoa and beat with a spoon to mix.

Fold in the chocolate chips and pour the mixture into a lined roasting tin approx. 30cm x 20cm x 5cm deep.

Bake in a preheated oven (Gas 3) for 45 minutes until risen and firm. It should be slightly damp underneath the set top.

Place the tin on a wire rack to cool the gingerbread in the tin.

### ***For the icing***

Heat the butter and cocoa in a heavy based saucepan.

Once the butter has melted, sift in the icing sugar, whisking it thoroughly.

Lift the cooled gingerbread out of the tin and remove the paper. Pour over the icing to just cover the top and cut into slices when set.

**ENJOY!**

## Scarecrow Competition: 2024



June saw a wonderful array of scarecrows popping up around the village in celebration of our Scarecrow Competition. Rev'd Lucinda Wray-Wear was given the daunting task of judging this great display of village fun, supported by Lundi, her dog, and Miss Sally.



Of course, it should have come as no surprise that the Great British weather threw everything at us: wind, torrential rain and, fortunately, plenty of lovely sunshine – which helped to dry us off a little. Poor Lundi was forced to trudge through the dismal Summer weather whilst we toured the village; she was, of course, duly rewarded by plenty of hugs from her admirers once she made it to the Village

Hall for a much needed drying off (ABOVE LEFT), whilst we did likewise, refreshed with a cup of tea and cake.

As always, our thanks to all those who took part in the competition: to the fabulous scarecrow-makers, the musicians at the Barn Dance, the Fulford Art Group for their impressive array of art on display at the Café, the visitors who turned up to support us, and the dedicated team who ran the Scarecrow Café. It was a wonderful village-wide event and we are most grateful to all those who showed their support for this lovely event. It was not easy to select the winners as the level of entries was, as always, very



high indeed. We did, however, eventually reach a decision and the results are as follows:



### **Best in Show.**

Who would believe that the Rubik Cube is 50 years old? Some of us can remember when it was first launched – and 50 years later, we are no nearer solving the puzzle!

The level of detail that went into this entry was incredible. Well done Dawn – you even managed to keep him relatively dry in all that heavy rain.

### **WINNER: MOST TRADITIONAL.**

Congratulations Laura Higginson for an amusing take on bird-watching. Great thought had gone into the smallest details. The scarecrow seemed content to sit and watch the birds fly by.

### **Second Place: Sheepy Shenanigans.**

This display of sheep, complete with gate, was the work of Charlie Hughes – with help from Clive and Louise. I have had sheep in my garden, but they weren't as well



behaved as these cute little lambs. Well done Charlie – lovely way to drift off to sleep.

**Third Place: Woman on a Bench (BELOW).**



Please don't think that just because this lovely lady was clutching a copy of the Parish Magazine whilst perched on the bench as she 'whiled away' the hours after a day of gardening and tending to the planters on The Bank, swayed the judges in any way!

Our thanks to Sue James-Heath for a beautiful scarecrow.

**WINNER MOST ORIGINAL: Rapunzel (RIGHT).**

This picture doesn't do this entry justice: so much work went into creating this lovely Rapunzel, which was a worthy winner of First Place in this category. The tower was beautifully painted by Richard Evans, with a great deal of help from his daughters, I believe. An equal amount of work also went into plaiting all of that straw and entwining it with flowers. Admirable winner.



**Second Place: Rapunzel.**

Congratulations to Hannah Heath and her family for this lovely Rapunzel whose wonderful head of hair cascaded down from the Choir Stalls in Christ Church (LEFT). She



made quite an impression on the visitors in the church throughout the weekend. I am not sure anyone in the choir in years gone by had hair quite like hers.

**Third Place: Paddington Bear (BELOW).**

Paddington was found taking a much-needed rest on the bench at Bourne Court, with his Marmalade sandwiches safely stored under his hat. He seemed unfazed by the rain and the admiration from all those passing by.



Thank you to Caroline Hill and her family for this lovely Paddington Bear.

**WINNER: MOST HUMOROUS (LEFT).**

Of course, 2024 is the year for Barbie: first she hits the Box Office with her new film and then, fresh from Hollywood, she appears in Hilderstone.

Let's hope she managed to slow down the traffic coming into the village during her appearance! And thank you for making us all smile whenever we drove or walked past.

Well done to the Stubbs family at Bear Stakes.





### **Second Place: Oak Tree Farm (LEFT).**

As you would expect from the Most Humorous category, this funny fellow made us smile. Created by Oak Tree Farm Rural Project Ltd – with special help from Lee. Oak Tree manages the Village Green and has done a great job keeping it looking so good, so it was very fitting that it was the chosen location for this entry.

After the competition the scarecrow was carefully reassembled at Oak Tree Farm, to the amusement of visitors, I am sure.

### **Third Place: Diddy Squat Farm.**

Clearly Hilderstone was THE place for celebrities to hang out during our fabulous Scarecrow Competition, as even Jeremy Clarkson (with a little help from Mark Paxton) set up camp – close to



Barbie as it happens.

There was

Cow Juice (milk to the rest of us), with wellies, tractors and a much-needed umbrella to hand. Jeremy would be proud Mark!



Having been beautifully decorated for the Scarecrow Weekend, Christ Church hosted a special family service on the Sunday and played host to the café in the afternoon, with the weekend drawing to a close with the awards ceremony. Never one to be upstaged, Rev'd Lucinda Wray-Wear (and a somewhat reluctant Lundi) came dressed for the part.

## Church Matters: What is Church?



What do you think of when one mentions "Church?" Well, most people immediately think of a building, like Christ Church; the visible and local presence of the Christian faith.

Centuries ago, when the early Christians gathered for worship and to hear the Gospels of Jesus Christ, they did so in secret – someone's home perhaps – for fear of persecution. As the Christian church grew, however, dedicated buildings were established and became what we know today as "churches".

But "church" is not just about a building. It is also about the people; the invisible and universal body of all believers everywhere. Fellowship, worship and ministry are provided by people, not the building. The building provides the space within which we can gather.

And, when we gather, we do so for renewal – spiritual renewal within a world that does not seem to rest. Yet rest is what we need; it is what all of creation needs. It is why the Sabbath was established, for if we don't rest, we risk "burn-out". Even God rested on the seventh day (Genesis 2:1-3).

Church on Sunday, or any other day of the week for that matter, should not, therefore, be seen as just another demand on our busy existence. It provides us with the regular opportunity to be "fed" with the Word and Sacrament, to be in communion with one another, and to experience the blessed destiny. The rest to which all our Christian endeavours are directed. It is a foretaste of the heavenly banquet. It is a time when we look beyond the things we have to do – have a rest from them – and rejoice in our identity as the people God has saved.

As we near the end of the Summer Holiday period, I hope and pray that you will, in some way or another, have had chance to have a break from the "everyday" and returned refreshed and ready for the new season ahead; a season in which Christ Church celebrates Harvest Festival, marking the end of the agricultural year and celebrating God's provision and restoration.

## Church Matters: Readings & Services

Date		Old Testament	Epistle	Gospel
1 <sup>st</sup> Sept	CW	Deuteronomy 4: 1-2, 6-9	James 1: 17-27	Mark 7: 1-8, 14, 15, 21-23
8 <sup>th</sup> Sept	CW	Isaiah 35: 4-7a	James 2: 10 [11-13] 14-17	Mark 7: 24-37
15 <sup>th</sup> Sept	BCP	Isaiah 50: 4-9a	James 3: 1-12	Mark 8 27-38
22 <sup>nd</sup> Sept	<b>HARVEST FESTIVAL</b>			
	CW	Wisdom 1: 16-2:1, 12-22	James 3: 13-4:3, 7-8a	Mark 9: 30-37
29 <sup>th</sup> Sept	<b>UNITED BENEFICE SERVICE: HILDERSTONE</b>			
	CW	Numbers 11: 4-6, 10-16, 24-39	James 5: 13-20	Mark 9: 38-50
6 <sup>th</sup> Oct	CW	Genesis 2: 18-24	Hebrews 1: 1-4; 2: 5-12	Mark 10: 2-16
13 <sup>th</sup> Oct	CW	Amos 5: 6-7, 10-15	Hebrews 4: 12-16	Mark 10: 17-31
20 <sup>th</sup> Oct	CW	Isaiah 53: 4-12	Hebrews 5: 1-10	Mark 10: 35-45
27 <sup>th</sup> Oct	CW	Jeremiah 31: 7-9	Hebrews 7: 23-28	Mark 10: 46-52
3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov	CW	Isaiah 25: 6-9	Revelation 21: 1-6a	John 11: 32-44
10 <sup>th</sup> Nov	<b>REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE</b>			
		Jonah 3: 1-5, 10	Hebrews 9: 24-end	Mark 1: 14-20
17 <sup>th</sup> Nov	CW	Daniel 12: 1-3	Hebrews 10: 11-14 (15-18) 19-25	Mark 13: 1-8
24 <sup>th</sup> Nov	CW	Daniel 7: 9-10, 13-14	Revelation 1: 4b-8	John 18: 33-37



# The Hilderstone

## Christmas Tree Festival

7<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> December 2024



### At Christ Church Hilderstone

Our beautiful Christmas Tree Festival promises to bring plenty of festive cheer during a special time of year.

Come and see the beautiful trees in all their festive glory, in our beautiful historic church, and maybe indulge in a glass of Mulled Wine or tea/coffee and a Mince Pie or Two (it is Christmas after all)!

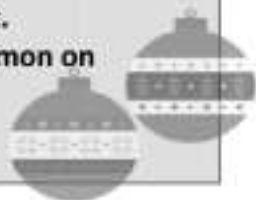
Any business, organisation, or group (whether that be friends or family) are welcome to participate in designing and decorating a tree.

Costing just £30 to sponsor a tree, each tree comes complete with lights.

Sponsors to decorate w/c Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December.

**All proceeds from the Christmas Tree Festival will go to the Christ Church Access for All Project.**

**For further information please contact Simon on [sa.shaw@rocketmail.com](mailto:sa.shaw@rocketmail.com)**



## Church Matters:

We have been most fortunate over the years to enjoy the support of members of our village to help us maintain and decorate our beautiful church for key events; not all of them are regular churchgoers but, like the Churchyard Tidy-Up Group, are willing and able to help their local church. This year is no exception: we are delighted that the Hilderstone Women's Institute has, for the second year, kindly offered to help decorate the church for the Remembrance Day Service, and to build upon their striking series of displays last year. Alongside the W.I., we will also have a team of volunteers to ensure the church looks its very best for both the Harvest Festival and the Christmas period. We are always looking for extra volunteers and should you join in, you are assured of a warm welcome, plenty of laughter and even tea and biscuits. So if you have an hour or two spare, please do come along.



**Harvest Festival: Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 11.15am.** As a farming community, this is an especially important service for Christ Church, celebrating, as it does, the bringing in of the harvest, the work of our farmers and the value of food, not just to ourselves, but for those around the world, many of whom face famine due to climate change, war, and corruption.

The name Harvest comes from the Old English word Haerfest, which means "Autumn", but the service we know now dates back to 1843, when Reverend Robert Stephen Hawker introduced a harvest thanksgiving service in Cornwall. All within our community are invited to bring harvest offering, such as food and flowers, to the church as a sign of thanks to God; these offerings are then auctioned off at the Harvest Supper (Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September) with the proceeds being divided between various charities.

If you would like to drop off any harvest offering, you are most welcome to do so, either on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September, between 12 noon – 2pm or during the service itself on Sunday.



**Remembrance Day Service: Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November, 10.45am.** Always the most poignant of services, Remembrance Day is so important as we not only remember those who gave their lives to defend our country, we remember the horror of war and the terrible toll paid by so many. To just cast your eye upon the Roll of Honour in Christ Church, which now resides in the South Aisle of the church, you see the list of names of those our village lost in the two World Wars.

For those wishing to join us for this service, please note the service starts at the earlier time of 10.45am, to allow for the Two Minute Silence at 11am by the War Memorial. The church will also be open from 12.30pm – 4pm.

**Benefice of Fulford-in-Stone with Hilderstone.** With our new Vicar, comes the opportunity to review and adapt our day-to-day running of our church. One such change is the decision to set up a Benefice Facebook page, with the intention of providing a platform on which all of our news, photographs, services etc can be broadcast, whilst also providing an additional means of contacting the Benefice, alongside the existing telephone number and email addresses. This is a 'work in progress' in so far as we have set the page up, but are in the middle of populating it with pictures, editorial etc. We will keep you posted on progress.

**Churchyard Tidy Up.** We are coming to the end of our sessions as Winter sets in. Our thanks to all those who continue to support our maintenance of the churchyard.

Our sessions run from 10am – 12 noon, with a coffee break at 11am.

21<sup>st</sup> September

26<sup>th</sup> October - (please note *change of date*)

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#### **In Memoriam:**

We remember in our prayers the family and friends of Steven Poole, whose funeral is being held at Christ Church Hilderstone on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September at 2.30pm and Tom Deaville, who lived at No. 4 Eastholme.



## Preserving our churchyard as a Haven for Nature



Like so many burial grounds, our churchyard is managed by a small team of volunteers who are keen to preserve the monuments and support our wildlife. Through the national charity 'Caring for God's Acre', we have learnt how best to achieve the preservation of rare species of plants and wildflowers and the management of grassland to encourage wildlife, whilst still encouraging visitors to this precious place.

In past editions of this magazine, we have looked at the various seasons and what they bring to our beautiful churchyard: the rare Waxcap fungi which make an appearance in the Autumn; the delightful wildflower 'Foxes & Cubs', which adorns our churchyard in the summer months (and shown in all its splendour on the back cover of this edition of the magazine); the majestic Swifts which swoop and chatter throughout the Summer; the trees which stand tall against the Medieval strip farm behind the church.

In times past, the churchyard was often seen as a silent and solemn place; now, as we turn our attention to the need to provide havens for wildlife, and a place to sit and enjoy the beauty of our surrounds, our churchyards have



taken on a very different identity – full of the sounds and colour of a vibrant wildlife haven, which we are so fortunate to enjoy here in Hilderstone.

This year we set aside an area in the 'old' part of the churchyard, allowing the grass and wildflowers to grow between April to September (see *OVERLEAF*), enabling native plants to flower and seed, thereby helping to preserve and enhance this special habitat and the wildlife dependent on it.

A path of mown grass twists and turns through this long grass, encouraging visitors to amble amidst the wildflowers and old graves, ending up at our Garden of Remembrance, where a bench invites the visitor to sit and to enjoy the tranquillity and beautiful views across the fields. En route, you will see small paths of beaten grass where wildlife, such as hedgehogs, have meandered through on their nocturnal journeys and, if you are lucky, you will see the birds swoop and sit on the gravestones, in search of the insects which call this long grass home. *Our churchyard is open to all: come along, sit awhile and enjoy the peace and beauty of this special place.*



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## The Autumn Preparations of Bees

Honeybees are incredibly resourceful creatures, and their preparation for Winter begins well before the first frost. As Autumn arrives, the colony's focus shifts from expansion to consolidation. Here are some key activities that take place in the hive during this season:

**Honey Storage:** Bees cap off their honey store with beeswax to preserve it for the winter months. This honey will be their primary food source when foraging becomes impossible.

**Population Adjustment:** The queen bee reduces her egg-laying rate, leading to a natural decline in the hive's population. Fewer bees mean fewer mouths to feed during the scarce Winter months.

**Expelling Drones:** Drones, or male bees, are often expelled from the hive in Autumn. They have fulfilled their purpose of mating with a queen, and their presence is no longer sustainable as they do not contribute to foraging or hive maintenance.

**Insulating the Hive:** Bees cluster together to maintain warmth. They vibrate their flight muscles to generate heat, keeping the core of the cluster at a survivable temperature throughout the winter.

### **Beekeepers' Autumn Checklist.**

Beekeepers also have a list of crucial activities to ensure their hives thrive:

**Hive Inspections:** Regular checks are performed to assess the health of the colony and the adequacy of honey stores. Beekeepers look for signs of disease, pests, and other potential issues.

**Supplemental Feeding:** If honey stores are insufficient, beekeepers may provide supplemental feeding with sugar syrup or fondant to ensure the bees have enough food to last the winter.

**Combining Weak Hives:** Sometimes, weaker colonies are combined with stronger ones to improve their chances of survival, this is done carefully to avoid conflict between the different bee populations.

**Pest Management:** Varroa mites and other pests can devastate a colony. Beekeepers take steps to treat and manage these pests in order to keep their bees healthy.

**Insulating the Hive:** Insulating the hives and ensuring they are sheltered from the wind can help maintain a stable temperature. Beekeepers can use windbreaks and are known to use sheep's wool to help insulate hives for extra protection.

*We can all take simple steps, like planting bee-friendly flowers and getting those spring bulbs in the ground now, to help ensure plenty of nectar is available in those early Spring months. By fostering a bee-friendly environment, we can ensure our essential pollinators continue to thrive.*

## Hilderstone Heritage: Part 46



In 1974, Sir Nicholas Pevsner, probably the world's greatest architectural historian, produced the last volume in his 'Buildings of England' series. It happened to be Staffordshire and there was only one

entry for Hilderstone – the Church. Now, fifty years later, the revised edition has been produced. The Black Country now has its own volume, so our village of Hilderstone gets more of a look in!

The chapel, built in 1894, is considered "Not large, but well placed to catch the eye. L-plan, with a porch in the angle. Red brick, segmented pointed windows".

Also, the Smithy and School House (*OVERLEAF*) are considered a "very neat pair. Whitewashed brick, slate roofs and Gothic windows with intersecting tracery".

Most interestingly, the book states "Although a Roman road passed through Hilderstone, it can hardly have been

*ABOVE LEFT: The chapel in the early 20th century and, RIGHT, in the 1930s.*





LEFT: taken in 1907, this postcard shows the Smithy and School House on the right, covered in ivy.

straight. A twisting road now follows the undulating

terrain through the heart of the village, leaving little room for pedestrians". [All quotes, © Yale University Press]. If only they had seen the village before the pavement was added between Briar Cottage and Mill House in 1960!

What is fascinating is that oral tradition has it that a Roman 'pavement' was discovered under the old school playground in times gone by. I have known this story all my life and now there is a distinct possibility that it is true! For 'pavement' read 'paving' perhaps?

In the last article, on the history of the Post Office in Hilderstone, I used a photograph taken from the last full newspaper article on the village, from the Staffordshire Weekly Sentinel, Friday August 17th 1973. It began:



"George Wells meets a grocer who became noted for his home-made pork pies, a postmistress with an appropriate name, and hears about another ghost." The subtitle was, "Hilderstone – a Pleasant, Happy Little Place."

George Wells was a very well-known and respected local journalist in north Staffordshire. In 1973 he wrote:

"Heavy rain which heralded my trip to Hilderstone looked determined and lasting as I left Meir Heath on the B5066. Luckily the sun intervened," writes George Wells. "A pleasant, happy little place is Hilderstone (pop 300). Set in superb rural surroundings with woods and pasture, the village is undulating and drawn out, and the roads leading off from the corner by the village school give the impression of a helicopter's buckled blades.

"Hilderstone, at one time called Helduveston, is not saturated in historical record, though it existed at the time of the Norman Conquest. The little church looked as though it had been there since that time as I viewed it from the distance but, as I was to learn later, it is not yet halfway through its second century.

"One of my first calls was to the grocer's shop in Sandon Road, where I met Geordie Mrs Nellie Spencer, who runs the business with her husband, George. George, a former Field Bakery Staff Sergeant in the Army, was out on his rounds with his travelling shop, visiting the little places where people would otherwise have difficulty in getting their victuals. Mrs Spencer met her husband when he attended a church parade while stationed in the north, and they were eventually married at Hexham Abbey.

"They not only sell everything from clothes pegs to patent medicines, but both father and son became renowned for their own bread and making "special" pork pies. A special policeman for 12 years, George is not the only member of the family "on the run". A married daughter, Rose, runs a mobile hair-styling salon. Now Mrs T Mardling, she lives at Sharpley Heath, on the perimeter. Mr and Mrs Spencer have a 21-years-old daughter, Patricia, who is a medical secretary in London's famous Harley Street, and a 17-years-old son, John, a laboratory technician at the Doulton factory at Stone."

To be continued....

[The last newspaper article I am aware of that featured Hilderstone was in 1984, but it was only a short piece.]

## CONVOLVULUS

"Don't touch that it's poisonous!" I had spent a memorable day at 'Ivy Cottage'. Every detail is ingrained in my memory, both good and bad. I was eight years old and standing with my mother at the bus stop just a short distance from the Crewe Arms. We were waiting for the Crosville bus from Chester to take us home from Madeley Heath. I had been reflecting on my day. 'Ivy Cottage', my granddad's home, and its environs, were where I was most happy. We had been there all day, it was mum's family home, and she had a week's catch-up of gossip to get through with her eldest sister, Beattie. They were well used to letting me loose in the back fields and knew my stomach would steer me back when it told me to.

As usual, I was sitting on the back doorstep considering the day and my contribution to it. I sat there doing an audit on everything that attracted me to this so special of places. To the right was the Whizz Bang as my uncles affectionately called the iron-roofed washhouse with its brown stone sink, wooden stopper and cold-water tap. Next to it was the Duckett Loo with its bucket emptied by Mr. Cliffe, known locally as 'Ashes of Roses'. Next to that was Billy, the bad-tempered pig, who I was told had replaced two tons of coal. Earlier, I sat on the railway fence waiting for the engine bringing the coal from the Bang Up and Fair lady Pits at Leycett. I always had a friendly wave from the engine driver while the coal was being unloaded in the wharf.

It had been one of those magical October days that seem to have been borrowed from late August and I decided not to waste a minute of it. I climbed over the fence into Weaver's Field and dropped down onto the railway track. I stopped at the pond to search for Sticklebacks before skimming some pieces of slate and watching the ever-increasing circle of ripples. I had startled a Thrush and sank to the ground to study its antics. I saw it for a moment on its untidy nest in the fork of a young Birch. When it flew away, I crept up to the tree and stretched to reach the nest. I felt four warm eggs. I took one out and almost immediately was attacked by the



incensed mother. I was terrified and raced back to the cottage hotly pursued by the irate bird. Later, I pricked out holes at each end of the egg and blew the yellow life out of it onto the rough ground. I immediately felt a dreadful pang of conscience. I was frightened to death should my parents find out. It was my first act of cruelty, and I was ashamed of myself. I learned a very hard lesson.

I couldn't get out of the yard quickly enough. I set off up the railway line stretching to reach each sleeper and determined to see my Granddad. He would be expecting me. He was working a day shift in the Pit's Fan-house and it was a visit I always looked forward to. I hurried past the Birch, but thankfully, there was no sign of the Thrush. However, I hadn't gone too far when I noticed a small hole beneath Leycett Lane, so I crossed the field to take a peek. I discovered it was a small tunnel for a narrow-gauge railway used to haul clay from Finney Green up to the brick works on the far side of the wharf. When empty the trucks were released and, powered by gravity, would race down the track, through the tunnel to be refilled. I had watched them often until recently when the works were closed down.

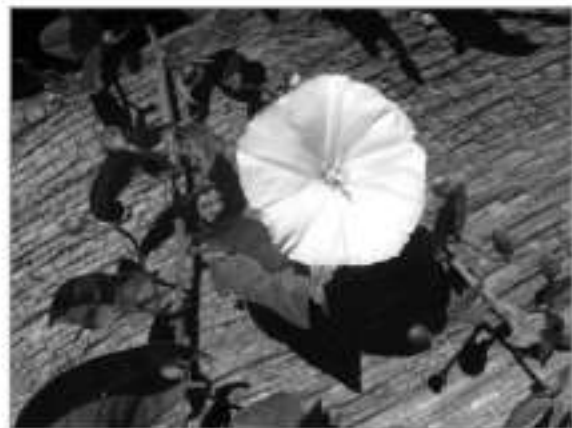
I cautiously pulled away some Brambles and stepped inside, it was pitch black. I heard a rustle and turned to make my escape, with a multitude of flapping wings around my head, and I was driven by sheer terror to get outside. I had disturbed a colony of bats. I fell upon the warm grass outside the tunnel entrance, physically shaken, and I dusted the imaginary creatures from my being; even today I remember every detail of it and have wondered whether the bats had seen what had happened to the Thrush and were making sure the same end wasn't going to happen to any of theirs.

We seemed to have been standing at the bus stop forever and my mother was anxious to get home before the night closed in. It was 1944 and the Second World War was in its fifth year. The sins of the day couldn't demand all my attention, and I was forever on the lookout for something to do. I'd done a subconscious evaluation on my trousers and Burberry pockets. Yes! my six favourite shotties were safe and my set of five, crazed, chipped Jack's together with a Parker's beer bottle top I was saving to fit on my school jumper. Oh! and I'd rubbed my battle wounds, pulled up my socks, tugged

my balaclava out of shape, practised my new whistle and was just thinking "what next?" when I saw a clamour of ragged Rooks float down like a bundle of old, tattered black rags before coming to rest on a group of mature Oaks across the lane in Finney Green. They were calling to each other peevishly as though fighting for shelter from the menaces of the night.

The last of the day hurriedly disappeared over the Cheshire Plain with the devil at its back. There was a sharpness to the wind heralding ill tidings and announcing that Winter was flexing its muscles; its chill fingers had nipped our noses and had sought out the weaknesses in our Utility clothing before playing an ethereal air on the telephone lines like some sort of Aeolian harp. The murmur of men's voices in the Crewe Arms and the ghostly scream of the London to Glasgow express shutting down as it coasted on the long incline to Crewe station, amplified by the clear night, had added to the apprehension.

Already there had been the distinctive and menacing, intermittent throb of a German Bomber beginning to announce its presence. The searchlights at the Crewe Locomotive Works and Rolls Royce Aircraft Factory had probed the sky. Behind the bus stop I had been attracted to a cluster of Bindweed threading its way through an arthritic, old Hawthorn. The white, funnel-shaped blooms were sprinkled with late summer dust and dampened with evening dew, giving them a luminescent quality as if in defiance of the black-out. It was as I reached out to pick one of the blooms that my mother



shouted. I was taken aback. She had never raised her voice at me before and I was on the point of tears. She immediately consoled me, but that first approach had shaken me. I was too young to understand the anxiety she must have been feeling and the urgent

need she had felt to get me home and back to the family. Ever since that fateful day I have never touched a Bindweed. Yet I marvel at the late summer shows and am saddened by their reputation. I have learned, sometimes the hard way, that both flora and fauna have as much right to be on this earth as we have and perhaps more so. Bindweed (*Convolvulus*) is important as a herbal medicine. It is not poisonous to humans but can be to animals.

Before long the green double-decker Crosville bus chugged slowly round the corner. Its hooded lights gave it a tired expression and its shadowy passengers, like inanimate cardboard cut-outs, seemed to be placed by the windows for effect. We climbed aboard comforted by the banter of the chirpy bus conductor and the surprisingly friendly faces of our fellow passengers, happy and content to be on our way home and my hand tightly clasped in my mother's.

*When I was a child, I spake like child,*

*I understood like a child, I reasoned like a child.*

*But when I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.*

*For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror;*

*Then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part;*

*Then I shall know fully, even though I am fully known.*

*And now these three remain: Faith, Hope and Love,*


*But the greatest of these is LOVE.*

*1-13 Corinthians*

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